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WIDEBODY AMBITION

Flydubai's Dreamliner deal in detail

TOWARDS A NEW MILLENNIUM

RNLAF transitions from C-130 to MC-390

PROTECTING NATO'S EASTERN FLANK

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Luca Radulescu/Vlimages

Welcome

It was while slumped in our camping chairs awaiting the start of the flying display at a Shuttleworth Collection airshow last year that the magnitude of 2024 dawned on me and several friends. We'd heard rumours that, fresh from his stint as commentator at Flying Legends, Air Leasing's Richard Grace was working on an airshow of his own – what we now know to be Sywell 2024 and what is quickly asserting itself as one of the most tantalising prospects in this year's calendar. This, combined with a host of events commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day (including the return of the D-Day Squadron), the Farnborough Airshow, the return of the LAA Rally proper after several years of the Grass Roots Fly-in at Popham and an awful lot more, mean 2024 is going to be a busy one.

It's for this reason that what we originally advertised as a World Aviation Events Calendar has, reluctantly, had to be narrowed in scope to cover the United Kingdom

and Europe to avoid the guide taking up the entire issue. In keeping with the airshows and events theme of this issue, we also hear from Peter Reoch, head of air operations for the Royal International Air Tattoo, regarding plans for this year's blockbuster show.

Elsewhere, there's a widebody focus as Richard Schuurman takes a look at the recent resurgence of orders for twin-aisle jets, including a deep dive into Flydubai's surprise order for 30 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners – a bold statement of intent for the low-cost carrier, it having operated nothing larger than a 737 MAX 9 previously. With Flydubai splashing the cash, Saudia flexing its muscles with a striking rebrand, Wizz Air having started an Abu Dhabi-based offshoot and Riyadh Air waiting in the

wings, one can only wonder whether an area smaller than the contiguous United States will need all these airlines. Especially as that's without mentioning the Middle East's 'big three' of Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways and the

raft of other, smaller national carriers and low-cost airlines operating in the region. Calls for consolidation have long been batted about when discussing the European airline scene, but whether the same will be said of the Middle East's increasingly crowded market in five or ten years remains to be seen. Where Europe and the Arabian peninsula differ however, is that, for the latter, airlines don't just move people from one place to another, but serve as status symbols for the region's oil-rich nations and their Sheikhs and Emirs.

Next month we'll be paying particularly close attention to the fleets of airlines from across the Arabian world, as well as those further afield and closer to home, with the inclusion of a guide to commercial aviation's boldest and brightest special liveries.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue.

Yours,

Martin

Martin Needham, Editor



On the cover

A Boeing 737 MAX 9 taxiing in following a display at the 2017 International Paris Air Show
AirTeamImages.com/MATT7X

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NASA's X-59 breaks cover



NASA's X-59 quiet supersonic research aircraft sits on the ramp at Lockheed Martin Skunk Works in Palmdale, California, during sunrise. This one-of-a-kind aircraft was formally presented this January after the completion of painting, although the aircraft was first photographed outside at Palmdale last year.

The X-59 is at the centre of NASA's Quesst mission, which focuses on providing data to help regulators reconsider rules that prohibit commercial supersonic flight over land. For 50 years, the US and other nations have prohibited such flights because of the disturbance caused by loud, startling, sonic booms on the communities below. The X-59 is

expected to fly at 1.4 times the speed of sound, or 925mph, gathering data that will inform regulatory decisions.

The X-59's design, shape and technologies are intended to enable the striking aircraft to achieve these speeds while generating a quieter, and less disturbing, sonic 'thump'.

With rollout complete, the Quesst team will shift to its next steps in preparation for first flight: integrated systems testing, engine runs and taxi testing for the X-59.

Flight testing is due to begin later in 2024 with the first quiet supersonic flight thereafter. Initial flight tests will be from Skunk Works before the aircraft moves over to NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center in Edwards, California, which will

serve as its base of operations.

Once NASA completes flight tests, the agency will fly the X-59 over several to-be-selected cities across the US, collecting input about the sound the aircraft generates and how people perceive it. NASA will provide that data to the Federal Aviation Administration and international regulators.

The X-59 is "a unique experimental airplane, not a prototype", NASA emphasised. The distinctive aircraft is 99.7ft long and its long, tapered nose – itself 38ft long – is designed to break up the shock waves that would ordinarily result from a supersonic aircraft causing a sonic boom.

The X-59's configuration means the cockpit is located almost halfway down the aircraft – and there is no forward-facing window. Instead, the Quesst team developed the eXternal Vision System, a series of high-resolution cameras feeding a 4K monitor in the cockpit.

The Quesst team also designed the X-59 with its engine mounted on top and gave it a smooth underside to help keep shockwaves from merging behind the aircraft and causing a sonic boom.

RJ accepts first E2s

ROYAL JORDANIAN Airlines has accepted its first two Embraer E195-E2s from an order for eight examples.

The two jets, JY-REA (c/n 19020116) and JY-REB (c/n 19020123), were delivered to the carrier's Amman hub on January 25 after a two-day ferry flight from Embraer's Sao Jose Dos Campos facility via Recife, Brazil and Gran Canaria, Spain.

They entered service over the weekend of January 27-28 on domestic connections to Aqaba as well as international routes to Istanbul. Based on the airline's use of its E1 airliners, it is anticipated that the 122-seaters will connect Amman with cities including Erbil, Beirut, Athens, Cairo, Riyadh, Baghdad and Kuwait City as well as destinations further afield such as Rome and Milan.

The pair are the initial examples from an eight-strong order placed in May 2023, which is to be split between two jets purchased outright and six leased examples via Azorra Aviation.

The aircraft have been configured

with two-class, 122-seat interiors that can accommodate 12 business class and 110 economy class passengers.

Samer Majali, vice-chairman and CEO of Royal Jordanian Airlines, said: "We're looking forward to becoming the first E2 operator in the Middle East. The E2 family will support our strategic aims, complementing our larger narrow body aircraft by matching capacity to demand,

reducing operating costs and carbon emissions, while delivering a significant upgrade to passenger experience and comfort; underlining our status as the preferred airline in the region."

Royal Jordanian is no stranger to Embraer aircraft, having once fielded a trio of E175s and five E195s. It currently operates single examples of the E1 types as it moves over to the larger E195-E2.



A320neo orders hit five figures



orders for the MAX models. Boeing data does not break down sales by variant.

Airbus's information shows that in 2023 the company received 1,689 net orders for the A320neo Family models, comprising 1,286 A321neos, 402 A320neos and one A319neo. These included large A321neo purchases from Azul (375 aircraft), Turkish Airlines (150), easyJet (104) and United Airlines (60). A320neo purchases included large buys from Air India (140) and IndiGo (125).

Airbus delivered 571 A320neo Family aircraft last year, comprising 317 A321neos, 247 A320neos and seven A319neos. Recent handovers include Transavia France's initial A320neo, F-GNEO (c/n 11918), which was put into operation on French domestic and Mediterranean routes during January. Transavia is due to receive 12 more A320neos by the end of 2024. Overall, Airbus received orders for 2,094 new aircraft in 2023, the fifth year in a row the European company outsold its US competitor.

RECENTLY RELEASED data shows Airbus has sold more than 10,000 A320neo Family aircraft since their launch on December 1, 2010.

The European company's updated orders

tally for the aircraft by December 31 last year totalled 10,354 aircraft comprising 6,171 A321neos, 4,122 A320neos and 61 A319neos. Boeing's orders and deliveries information shows it has received 7,803

JetBlue Spirit merger blocked

JETBLUE'S BID to buy rival Spirit Airlines has been halted by a US district judge in Boston, on anti-competitive grounds. Judge William Young said he agreed with the US Justice Department and several state attorney generals who had sued in an antitrust lawsuit in March 2023 to stop the deal, believing that eliminating a rival would increase fares.

The \$3.8bn takeover would have created the fifth-largest airline in the US. JetBlue believed the deal would have allowed it to better compete against rivals such as Delta, American and United, adding 202 Airbus aircraft to its fleet overnight. In a joint statement, the airlines said: "We disagree with the US District Court's ruling. We believe that our combination is the best opportunity to increase much-needed competition and choice by bringing low fares and great service to more customers in more markets while enhancing our ability to compete with the dominant US carriers. We are reviewing the court's decision and are evaluating our next steps as part of the legal process."

Spirit is now in a precarious situation

after its shares plunged by more than 50% following the news. The airline reportedly lost \$158m during the third quarter of 2023, citing "softer demand for our product and discounted fares in our markets". Ongoing supply chain issues and increased operating expenses were also blamed.

TD Cowen aviation analyst and managing director Helane Becker said one move now for the Florida-based airline would be to search for another buyer, "but a more likely

scenario is a Chapter 11 filing, followed by a liquidation". One other possibility is another bid from Frontier Airlines, which had originally offered Spirit a cash-and-stock deal in 2022, only for it to be rejected for JetBlue's more lucrative all-cash offer.

The administrative court's decision could also prove a headache for Alaska Airlines, which recently announced that it intends to buy Hawaiian Airlines in a \$1.9bn deal.



AirTeamImages.com/Kaden Chang

Lufthansa City receives first A319



Rene Köhler

LUFTHANSA'S NEWEST subsidiary, City Airlines has taken delivery of the first of four Airbus A319s ahead of its launch in March.

Wearing the carrier's new livery, the 16-year-old aircraft D-ABGH (c/n 3245),

which has previously operated for Air Berlin and Eurowings, touched down at the airline's Munich base on January 9.

The aircraft's arrival follows an announcement in December by Lufthansa Group of an order for 40 Airbus A220-300s,

plus 20 options. The airframes will go straight to the new entity when deliveries start in 2026. The deal with the European manufacturer also included securing purchasing options for 40 additional Airbus A320 Family jets.

In a surprise move, Lufthansa Group also signed a deal with US giant Boeing for 40 737 MAX 8 aircraft, plus 60 purchasing options. So far, no announcement has been made as to which airline within the group will receive the Boeing aircraft.

Dr Detlef Kayser, member of the executive board, fleet and technology, said the deal, worth about \$9bn at list prices, "increases our order list of around 200 aircraft to 280 – plus an additional 120 purchasing options for further state-of-the-art short and medium-haul aircraft".

He added: "We are pleased that both Airbus and Boeing were able to convince us of all commercial and technological aspects. In addition, the decision for the Boeing 737-8 MAX will also give us more flexibility for the procurement of short and medium-haul aircraft in the future."

Capacity about-turn at Amsterdam

AMSTERDAM/SCHIPHOL Airport has announced an increase in capacity for the peak summer 2024 season after discussions were held with the airport's air traffic control, security and customs providers.

The airport – the fourth busiest in Europe in terms of passengers flown – has reported that there is room for 483,000 flights this year, and that during the peak season from March 31 to October 26 it will provide capacity for 293,000 flights. This is 13,000 more than the 280,000 flights previously announced. However, to increase the capacity, the airport said "a limited reduction is needed at peak times to allow for safe and stable operations" and that its users "have agreed to help with this".

The move came after the Netherlands' government abandoned plans to cut flights at the airport to address environmental and noise concerns. Various airlines from around the world and the European Commission pushed back against this experimental scheme.

The airport also recently announced that it handled 61.7 million passengers in 2023,

an 18% increase from 2022. There were also 441,963 aircraft movements last year, up 11% compared with 2022. However, cargo numbers dropped from 1.44m tonnes

in 2022 to 1.37m tonnes on 15,969 cargo flights last year. Schiphol directly links the country to 305 destinations, 126 of them intercontinental.



Royal Schiphol Group

End of the line for A330-300?



Airbus

THE LATEST Airbus orders and deliveries data shows there are no A330-300s left in the company's order backlog, signalling the end of production of that particular A330 variant after 30 years.

No orders were received for the variant in 2023, Airbus's data for the year shows. The remaining backlog of eight aircraft, for a Chinese leasing company, were cancelled during the year.

Airbus delivered 776 A330-300s (of

which 730 remained in operation at the end of 2023, Airbus data shows). The variant first flew on November 2, 1992 and received simultaneous European and US certifications in October 1993. Air Inter was the first operator in January 1994. General Electric CF6-powered examples were the initial A330-300s in service, deliveries of Rolls-Royce Trent 700 and Pratt & Whitney PW4000s following thereafter.

The other first-generation A330 variant, the A330-200, first flew in 1997. Airbus still offers this aircraft as the basis for the MRTT tanker-transport conversion. Three A330-200s were ordered in 2023, which will go to Airbus Defence and Space at Getafe in Spain for conversion. Two of these aircraft are destined for the NATO Multinational Multirole Tanker Transport Fleet while the other is to be delivered to the United Arab Emirates Air Force.

Early start for air taxis

AIR TAXI announcements started early in 2024. Supernal, an offshoot from car-maker Hyundai, used this year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas to publicly unveil its concept electric vertical take-off and landing aircraft, the S-A2 (pictured).

The V-tail SA-2 is being designed to cruise at just over 100kts at 1,500ft on 25 to 40-mile trips in urban areas. Supernal claims the aircraft "will operate as quietly as a dishwasher: 65 dB in vertical take-off and landing phases and 45 dB while cruising horizontally".

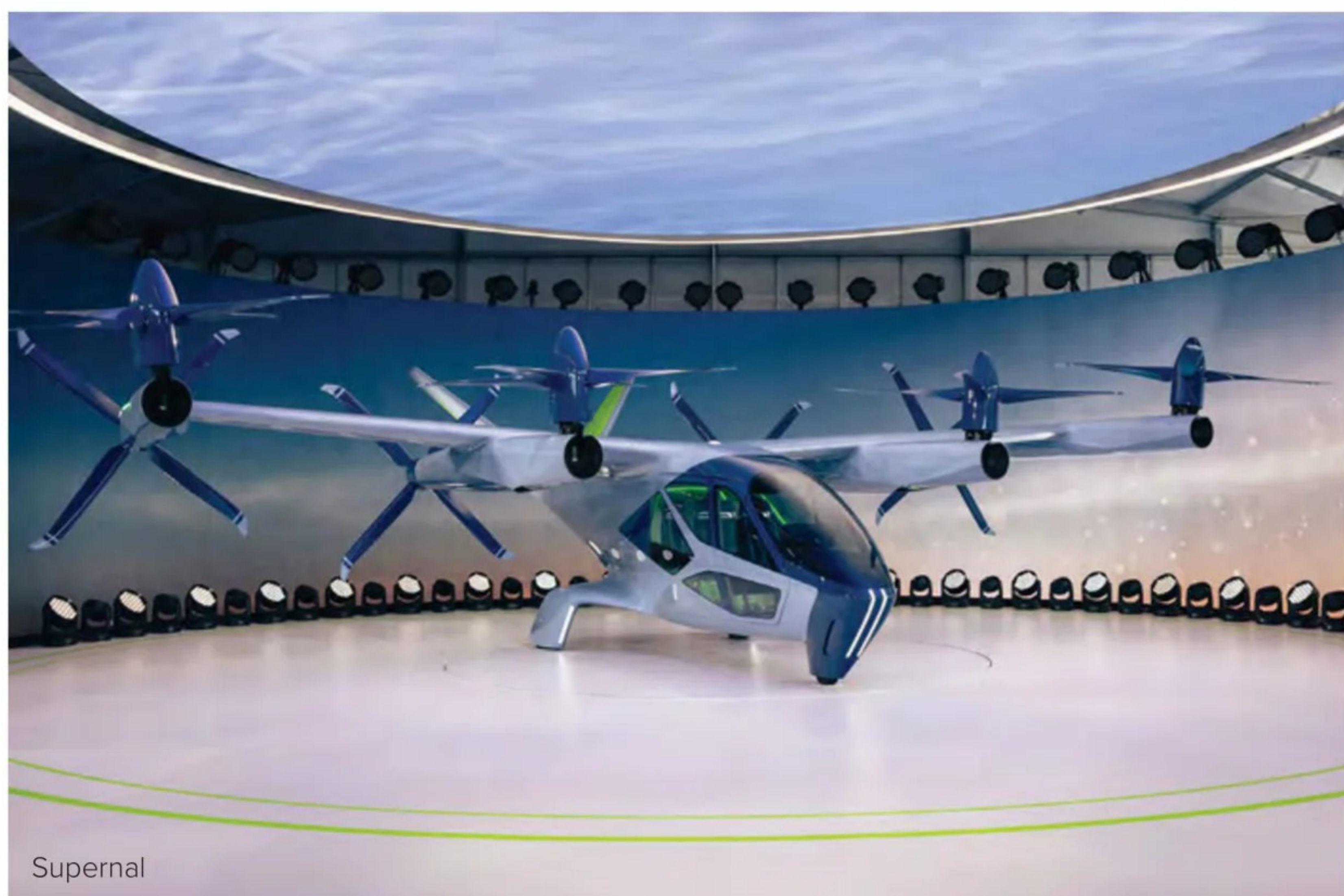
Separately, Archer Aviation and NASA announced they will study high-performance battery cells, including testing at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility in Switzerland, described as "one of the most advanced high speed X-ray facilities in the world".

Meanwhile, Indian private aviation provider JetSetGo signed agreements with advanced air mobility developers Electra.aero, Overair and Horizon Aircraft

in Canada, covering the potential delivery of up to 280 new AAM aircraft.

JetSetGo currently operates Dassault Falcon bizjets. Founder and CEO Kanika

Tekriwal said "India's geography and demographics make it an ideal launch market" for on inter-city commutes and intra-city shuttles.



Supernal

Safran begins RISE testing



SAFRAN AIRCRAFT Engines has started wind-tunnel testing of the ECOENGINÉ, a 1:5-scale demonstrator of the Open Fan – a powerplant under development for the CFM RISE project to develop the next generation of single-aisle commercial jets.

The Open Fan aims to reduce fuel burn and CO2 emissions by 20%, and up to 80% when combined with sustainable aviation fuels by 2035. The trials are under way at France's national aerospace research agency ONERA in Modane.

Cargo alliance scrapped



AIR FRANCE-KLM Group has shelved plans to create a cargo alliance with shipping giant CMA CGM after a report that a "tight regulatory environment in certain important markets has prevented the co-operation from working in an optimal way".

The pair will now revert to operating their own cargo fleets while continuing to co-operate on some routes where possible from the end of March 2024.

In a joint statement, the companies said: "Both groups remain committed to working collaboratively to ensure cargo customers can continue to benefit from their respective networks."

The planned ten-year tie-up was first announced in March 2022 and started last April. The deal saw CMA CGM acquire a

9% stake in the Air France-KLM Group. This shareholding will remain in place until February 2025. However, the Marseille-based shipping company will immediately give up its seat on the airline group's board.

CMA CGM moved into the air cargo sector in 2021 after demand surged during the COVID-19 pandemic. It purchased a fleet of four Airbus A330-200F freighters, followed by a pair of Boeing 777Fs in September 2021.

However, the demand for cargo-only flights has lessened since passenger services began returning to normal. Indeed, for the first nine months of 2023, the Air France-KLM Group reported that its revenues in the sector had fallen by 31% compared with the same period in 2022.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ICELANDAIR HAS signed a deal with lessor CDB Aviation for two Airbus A321LRs to be delivered in the second half of 2025. The airline now has agreements to lease seven A321LRs while it awaits delivery of its A321XLRs examples, of which it has 13 on firm order. Deliveries of these are set to begin in 2029. Icelandair plans to use the type to replace its ageing Boeing 757 fleet, which includes 14 -200s and two -300s.

SWISS INTERNATIONAL Air Lines has restored its entire fleet after grounding 25 aircraft during the COVID-19 pandemic. The final aircraft, a 26-year-old Airbus A320 HB-IJO (c/n 673), returned to operational duties on December 19 performing flight LX974 from Zurich to Berlin. The jet left storage in Amman, Jordan, on December 17.

LOW-COST GIANT Ryanair will launch three new routes from Edinburgh airport for summer 2024. From April 1, the airline will begin a twice-weekly service from the Scottish capital to Agadir, Morocco. The route will be joined by the French destinations of Bergerac and Biarritz from April 2 and 3, respectively, also at a twice-weekly frequency.

LATAM AIRLINES Group has placed an order for five additional Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners powered by GE Aerospace GENx engines. The new deal will bring the total number of 787s in its fleet to 46. It also operates Boeing 767s and 777s, as well as 256 Airbus A320 Family aircraft.

IN ORDER to support its short-term growth, Air Canada is set to acquire four Airbus A320s recently retired by Alaska Airlines. The European-built aircraft have an average age of 14 years and are currently undergoing maintenance in Greensboro, North Carolina. They will join the Canadian flag carrier's existing fleet of 16 A320s.

GAMA AVIATION took over the operation of the Wales Air Ambulance's four red Airbus H145s in January. Gama will operate the helicopters for the next seven years, operating from Dafen, Cardiff, Caernarfon and Welshpool, and will provide a fifth, back-up H145 to ensure service continuity during maintenance periods.

THE EUROPEAN Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has published the first proposal to regulate ground handling across European Union airports, covering aircraft loading and unloading with cargo, mail and baggage; passenger boarding and disembarkation; de-icing/anti-icing; refuelling; turnarounds; pushback; and towing.

Air France and PdF formate for Athos A350



AIR FRANCE recently put out a film showing one of its recently delivered Airbus A350-900s flying with the Patrouille de France (PdF), rounding

off a year marking the airline’s 90th anniversary and the French Air and Space Force aerobatic team’s 70th birthday year. A specially arranged photo session

involved F-HUVB (c/n 612) joining up with the French national team’s Dassault/Dornier Alpha Jet Es above the Camargue region of southwest France at an altitude of more than 8,000ft. The A350 was on its ferry flight from Airbus’s Toulouse factory to Paris/Charles de Gaulle.

Dubbed ‘Athos A350’ in reference to the ‘Athos’ call-signs of PdF pilots, the flight involved Eric Magnan from Airborne Films capturing video and photos. The striking aerial footage was shot from a Daher TBM 700 equipped with a gyro-stabilised camera. Composer Augustin Saldjian created original music performed by the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra.

Eric Prévot, event manager and mission leader, said: “A month of preparation and thorough co-operation was required to plan this 45-minute flight down to the smallest detail, guaranteeing the highest level of safety.”

Airbus and Boeing orders and deliveries December 2023					
	Type	Orders	Customer Breakdown	Deliveries	Customer Breakdown
Airbus	A220	65	Delta Air Lines (14); Lufthansa (40); Private customer (1); Undisclosed customer/s (10)	11	airBaltic; Air Lease Corporation (ITA Airways) (2); Breeze Airways (2); Delta Air Lines (3); JetBlue Airways (2); Qantas Airways
	A319neo	-	-	1	AMAC Aerospace
	A320neo	64	easyJet (52); Undisclosed customer/s (12)	42	AerCap (Tianjin Airlines [3]); Aircalin; Air China (3); Avolon (Transavia France); Azul; BOC Aviation (Uzbekistan Airways [2]); BOCOM Leasing (China Southern Airlines [2]); CALC (Air India [2]); CDB Leasing (Air India); CDB Leasing (Avianca); flynas; ICBC Leasing (China Southern Airlines [3]); ICBC Leasing (Tigerair Taiwan); IndiGo (4); Juneyao Air; Kuwait Airways; LATAM Airlines Group (LATAM Airlines Brasil [2]); JetSmart (Chile [3]); Lufthansa (Austrian Airlines); Lufthansa (Brussels Airlines); SAS (3); Saudia (flyadeal); Vistara (3);
	A321neo	523	Avolon (100); easyJet (101); EVA Air (15); Korean Air (20); Turkish Airlines (150); Undisclosed customers (137);	38	Air Lease Corporation (ITA Airways); Air Lease Corporation (Sunclass Airlines); Air Lease Corporation (Transavia); Asiana Airlines (2); BOCOM Leasing (China Southern Airlines); British Airways (2); CALC (Xiamen Airlines); Cathay Pacific Aircraft Services Limited (HK Express); Delta Air Lines (3); Frontier Airlines; Gulf Air; ICBC Leasing (Air Busan); ICBC Leasing (Shenzhen Airlines); JetSmart (Chile); Lufthansa (Eurowings); NAS Aviation Services (China Southern Airlines); NAS Aviation Services (LATAM Airlines Group); Qantas Airways (Jetstar Airways [2]); Pegasus Airlines (2); Saudia (2); SMBC Aviation Capital (JetSmart Chile); SMBC Aviation Capital (Sky Airline); SMBC Aviation Capital (Volaris); Turkish Airlines; United Airlines (2); VietJet Air; Wizz Air (4)
	A330-900	-	-	6	Air Lease Corporation (Sunclass Airlines); Cebu Pacific; CIT Leasing (Condor); Delta Air Lines (2); ITA Airways
	A350-900	83	Air France-KLM (33); Turkish Airlines (50)	11	Air China; Air France (2); Air India (2); Cathay Pacific; China Eastern Airlines; Iberia; Lufthansa; Sichuan Airlines; Turkish Airlines
	A350-1000	56	Air-France KLM (11); EVA Air (18); Qantas (12); Turkish Airlines (15)	3	British Airways; Japan Airlines (2)
	A350F	11	Cathay Pacific (6); Turkish Airlines (5)	-	-
	Total	802		112	
Boeing	737 MAX	301	Avolon (40); Ethiopian Airlines (20); Lufthansa (40); SunExpress (45); Undisclosed customer/s (156)	44	AerCap (2); Air India (6); Air Lease Corporation (3); Akasa Air (2); Alaska Airlines (2); American Airlines (3); BOC Aviation (2); Ethiopian Airlines Group; flydubai; GOL Linhas Aereas (2); Ryanair (5); Southwest Airlines (8); TUI Travel PLC; United Airlines (6)
	767-300F	-	-	3	FedEx Express (3)
	777F	2	Undisclosed customer/s (2)	4	Atlas Air (2); Lufthansa; Qatar Airways
	787-9	60	Ethiopian Airlines (11); Qantas (4); Undisclosed customer/s (45)	8	AerCap (2); All Nippon Airways; Juneyao Airlines; Korean Air; Qatar Airways (2); Turkish Airlines
	787-10	8	Qantas (8)	3	EVA Air (2); Singapore Airlines
	Total	371		62	

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Germany donates Sea Kings to Ukraine

DURING A meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group – otherwise known as the Ramstein Group – on January 23, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius revealed that the nation will donate six Marineflieger (German Navy) Sea King Mk 41 multi-role utility helicopters that are due for retirement to the Ukrainian armed forces.

The move comes after the UK became the first NATO nation to give Ukraine three Sea Kings reacquired by the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) from HeliOperations Ltd, an aircrew training company based in Portland, Dorset. The first of these

three ex-Royal Navy helicopters was a Sea King HAS5U (XZ920), which was delivered to Ukraine in November 2022. This was followed by a Sea King HAS5 (ZA166) in December, that year, and finally a Sea King HU5 (ZA134) in May 2023. The last of these was the first to be delivered in Ukrainian Air Force (UkrAF) markings.

Germany's fleet of Sea King Mk 41 helicopters has now become surplus to requirements, with the type being replaced by the NH90 Sea Lion (the German variant of the NH90 NATO Frigate Helicopter), which entered operational service in June 2020. While the German Navy is phasing out

its Sea King Mk 41 fleet, it is believed that approximately 20 aircraft remain in use.

In confirming Berlin's intent to donate six Sea Kings to Ukraine, Pistorius said: "The Sea King is a proven and robust helicopter that will help the Ukrainians in many areas, from reconnaissance over the Black Sea to transporting soldiers. It is the first German delivery of this kind." He did not confirm a delivery timeline for the helicopters, but the first examples are expected to reach Ukraine by the end of 2024. The donation comes as part of Germany's latest pledge to send wider military support for Ukraine.



Steve Lynes

Brunei accepts initial C-295Ws



Reuben Zammit

THE FIRST two Airbus C295MW medium-lift tactical transport aircraft for the Royal Brunei Air Force left Airbus's facility at Sevilla-San Pablo Airport in Spain on their delivery flight to Brunei on January 18. After departure, TUDB502 (c/n 224) and TUDB503 (c/n 225) performed a night stop at Malta International Airport in Luqa, before pressing on towards Luxor, Egypt, the following day.

Airbus Defence and Space initially revealed it had secured an order for an unspecified number of C295MWs from the Royal Brunei Air Force in December 2022, with the airlifters reportedly set to be delivered in two batches. While it has not been confirmed, it has been reported that a total of four C295MWs were ordered.

Norwegian F-35s deploy to Iceland

THE ROYAL Norwegian Air Force (RNoAF) has deployed four F-35A Lightning II fifth-generation multi-role stealth fighters from 331 Skvadron at Ørland Main Air Station, Norway, to Keflavik Air Base in Iceland to provide a quick reaction alert (QRA) capability in support of NATO's Icelandic air policing (IAP) mission.

The deployment from January 15 marks the start of the first of three NATO fighter missions to Iceland that are scheduled to take place in 2024. The Norwegian jets are expected to remain at Keflavik AB until mid-February, when they will return to Ørland. In addition to the four 331 Skvadron jets, about 100 personnel from various departments within the RNoAF's 131 and 132 Air Wings also deployed to Iceland.

While this marks the fourth time that Norway has dispatched its F-35As to



Peter R Foster

participate in NATO's IAP mission – the first of which was conducted in 2020 – this latest deployment marks a milestone for the RNoAF as it is the first operational F-35A mission for 331 Skvadron, which was reactivated to fly the type on August 1, 2023. While in Iceland, two of the four RNoAF F-35As will remain on 24/7 standby, ready to intercept unknown military and

civilian aircraft in order to safeguard NATO and international airspace.

Lt Col Kenneth 'Chain' Vika, the officer commanding 331 Skvadron, said: "Our participation in [IAP] shows our willingness to support NATO and our increased ability to solve missions with combat aircraft both domestically and abroad."

First F-35A for 312 Sqn



Lockheed Martin

THE FIRST F-35A Lightning II fifth-generation multi-role stealth fighter for the Royal Netherlands Air Force's (RNLAf) 312 Squadron arrived at Leeuwarden Air Base on January 11. Prior to landing, F-039 (c/n AN-39) conducted a flypast over Volkel Air Base, where 312 Sqn will be relocated in the near future.

The aircraft was built at the F-35 Final

Assembly and Check Out (FACO) facility in Cameri, Italy. While the aircraft has yet to receive its 312 Sqn markings, it is expected to receive them before it is transferred to Volkel. The unit currently retains the F-16AM/BM (MLU) Fighting Falcon and is scheduled to continue flying the outgoing fighter until October, this year.

This latest F-35A was initially earmarked to

join the USAF's 323rd Test and Evaluation Squadron (TES) at Edwards AFB in California, but these plans were changed and the jet will now remain in the Netherlands. A decision has allegedly been made to instead transfer two F-35As to the 323rd TES in the highly anticipated Block 4 configuration. This F-35A is still a Block 3 aircraft, although it will be upgraded to Block 4 in the future.

Albania receives first Black Hawks



Albanian MOD

A PAIR of surplus UH-60A Black Hawk battlefield utility helicopters, which were formerly operated by the US Army, were delivered to Rinas Air Base, near Tirana in Albania, on January 13.

The two utility helicopters, believed to be 82-23666 and 82-23690 but now registered in Albania as FA-666 and FA-690, were delivered to Rinas by a USAF-operated C-17A Globemaster III (03-3122)

assigned to the 315th/437th Airlift Wing at Joint Base Charleston in California.

A contract for the acquisition of three second-hand UH-60As from the US Army was signed by Albania's then Defence Minister, Oltha Xhacka, during a visit to the US in May 2020. This formal agreement came just over a year after the move was initially announced in April 2019.

The Black Hawks will be used by the Albanian Air Force for utility, tactical transport, fast-roping and aerial firefighting missions. They are expected to be operated by the Regjimenti Helikopterëve at Tirana Heliport and will augment the three AS532AL Cougars and two EC145s already in service. The status of Albania's fleet of five AB205A-1s, seven AB206C-1s, eight Bo.105E-4s and one A109C remains uncertain.

Albanian has now become the fifth Balkan operator of the Black Hawk, joining Croatia, Greece, Romania and Turkey. Neighbouring Kosovo is also believed to be interested in acquiring the UH-60, but North Macedonia has recently opted for the AW149.

Spain offers Eurofighters to Colombia

THE FUERZA Aérea Colombiana (FAC; Colombian Air Force) received a new Eurofighter Typhoon proposal from the Spanish government in early December, with the proposed deal reportedly covering the supply of between 12-16 second-hand Tranche 2 Eurofighters from the Spanish Air and Space Force (SASF). No costs associated with this latest proposal have been revealed.

Following a robust exchange of views between Colombian President Gustavo Petro and Israel's Ambassador to Bogota Gali Dagan on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter), the Israeli government has suspended all sales and supplies of defence and security hardware and related services to Colombia.

This will rapidly affect the serviceability of Colombia's surviving fleet of approximately 19 Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)-produced Kfir C10/C12s, which were intended to serve until the end of 2024 and still rely on Israeli support, spares and weapons.

Colombia had looked at acquiring the F-16C/D Block 72 from the US, the JAS 39 Gripen E/F from Sweden (possibly

via the Embraer-run production line in Brazil) and the Rafale from France, which was reportedly selected but then cancelled at the end of 2022 due to economic constraints.

Some expected Colombia to turn to Israel to further extend the lives of its Kfir fleet. Colombia is known to favour the Eurofighter, having looked at new-build and second-hand examples several times since November 2015, when a FAC delegation evaluated the multi-role fighter at Morón in Spain.

The Spanish government previously offered second-hand Tranche 2 Eurofighters to Colombia in 2017 and followed up on this in February 2020 by offering 17 second-hand Tranche 1 Typhoons, while Airbus Defence & Space tabled a simultaneous offer of 15 Tranche 3 Eurofighters.

Madrid's latest offer of between 12-16 Tranche 2 Eurofighters to Colombia is understood to have a requirement (timescales and budget permitting) for 16 new Tranche 3 Eurofighters.



Peter Ten Berg

Pegasus unit base chosen



Boeing

THE US Department of the Air Force (DAF) has announced that it has selected Selfridge Air National Guard Base (ANGB) in Michigan as its preferred location to host the next KC-46A Pegasus tanker

unit, with the base expected to welcome its first aircraft in 2029.

The decision, announced on January 12, to base KC-46As at Selfridge ANGB will be formalised following the outcome

of a planned environmental impact assessment, which will be conducted in 2025. The USAF intends to base a total of 12 KC-46As at Selfridge, which is home to A-10C Thunderbolt IIs and KC-135R Stratotankers assigned to the Michigan Air National Guard's (ANG) 127th Wing. At present, the Selfridge-based A-10Cs and KC-135Rs are expected to be progressively withdrawn from operational use from 2026 and 2027, respectively.

The USAF reported: "Divesting the ageing A-10 fleet and KC-135s and replacing them with the KC-46 ensures Selfridge ANGB has an enduring and modern mission that meets the requirements of the National Defense Strategy.

"Selfridge ANGB is not precluded from being considered for a fighter aircraft mission or other potential missions in the future."

If formally approved, the first KC-46A tankers are expected to be delivered to Selfridge ANGB in 2029.

Second Eagles fly in

DELIVERY OF the second batch of new F-15EX Eagle II fighters to the USAF got under way on December 20, when two examples of the type arrived at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) in Florida following a ferry flight from Boeing's production facility at St Louis Lambert International Airport in Missouri.

The two fighters (20-0003/ET/EX3 and 20-0004/OT/EX4) were assigned to the 96th Test Wing's 40th Flight Test Squadron (FLTS) and 53rd Wing's 85th Test and Evaluation Squadron (TES), respectively.

The new Eagle IIs differ slightly from the initial two examples that are operated by the same two units. In addition to a cockpit pressure monitor and warning system and an ultra-high frequency antenna for satellite communications, the fighters also feature a forward fuselage that has been specifically redesigned for the USAF and are equipped with the AN/ALQ-250 Eagle Passive Warning Survivability System (EPAWSS) electronic warfare suite.

The arrival of these jets at Eglin will allow the USAF to accelerate testing of the F-15EX. Testing conducted by the USAF last year saw the air arm's first two Eagle IIs deploy to Alaska to participate in Exercise Northern Edge 2023. The fighters also



USAF/1Lt Savannah Bray

executed a series of advanced weapons integration missions that verified that the aircraft and its various munitions flew and communicated with each other properly. In addition, the pair flew to Hill AFB, Utah, where they successfully employed advanced air-to-ground weapons for the first time during Exercise Combat Hammer 2023.

The USAF's initial F-15EXs (20-0001/ET/EX1 and 20-0002/OT/EX2) arrived at Eglin in March and April 2021 (respectively). The delivery of this second pair occurred a year

later than was originally planned as a result of manufacturing-related issues.

The two Eglin-based test wings expect to receive a third pair of Eagle IIs before deliveries to the Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Fighter Wing at Portland Air National Guard Base – the type's first operational unit – in 2024. While the USAF initially planned to acquire 144 F-15EXs in total, this number was subsequently reduced to just 80 before it was later increased to 104. The Eagle II is expected to achieve initial operational capability by July 2024.

SwAFHF adopts B 17A



Key collection

THE SOLE airworthy Saab B 17A dive-bomber, SE-BYH (c/n 17239) *Blå Johan*, has been transferred to the Swedish Air Force Historic Flight (SwAFHF) from the custody of aircraft manufacturer Saab.

The aircraft first flew from Linköping on May 26, 1943 and was handed over to the

Swedish Air Force's F 7 Wing at Sätenäs in south-central Sweden on July 23.

Assigned to 2 Squadron, 17239 was soon nicknamed *Blå Johan*, which translates as Blue John – blue being the colour of a Swedish Wing's second squadron and 'J' its individual identifier.

Remaining in frontline Swedish Air Force service until damaged in a landing accident on July 3, 1951, the aircraft was initially stored before being converted to a target tug in March 1954 for the Swedish government as SE-BYH by civilian contractor Svensk Flygtjänst AB of Stockholm.

Acquired by Avia based at Visby, it flew for the final time on June 30, 1968 – a damaged cylinder effectively grounding the aircraft. During autumn 1969, it was returned to Linköping and placed in storage where it remained for almost three decades.

In 1996, the aircraft was restored to flight by Saab to take part in the company's 60th anniversary celebrations. With some 9,949 hours of volunteer work going into the project, SE-BYH took to the air again on June 11 the following year. Remaining with Saab since then and making countless appearances across Scandinavia, it is expected that the aircraft will join the rest of the SwAFHF fleet at Sätenäs in due course.

Ex-USN Otter lands at Hickory

THE HICKORY Air Museum (HAM) in North Carolina has confirmed the arrival of its most recent acquisition – former United States Navy (USN) de Havilland Canada NU-1B BuNo 144672. The airframe arrived by road from its previous home at the National Naval Aviation Museum (NNAM) in Pensacola, Florida, on January 12.

Originally procured as a UC-1A STOL utility transport in 1956, the aircraft was assigned to Air Development Squadron 6 (VX-6) at Rhode Island's Naval Air Station (NAS) Quonset Point and used in support of Operation Deep Freeze – the US Antarctic mission. Transferred to the Naval Air Test Center at NAS Patuxent River, Maryland, in 1965 and redesignated a NU-1B, the aircraft served in various capacities at Patuxent River and at the Naval Air Test Facility at Lakehurst, New Jersey, and the Pacific Missile Range at Point Mugu in California until 1975. Retired that year to Pensacola, the aircraft underwent restoration in 2007. Offered to other collections as part of the NNAM's recent

restructuring programme, HAM was "first in line with their hand raised".

In a statement, HAM noted BuNo 144672 will stay unassembled and out of public

view for the time being, until the museum fulfils the building of a new hangar. Once complete, BuNo 144672 will be hung from the hangar ceiling.



Hickory Air Museum

Hawker Typhoon rebuild recommences



Hawker Typhoon Preservation Group

THE PHYSICAL rebuild of Hawker Typhoon RB396 (G-TIFY) is back on track. Work on the rear fuselage

section, which forms the basis and identity of the project, recommenced at Airframe Assemblies on the Isle of Wight during the

second week of December 2023.

The Hawker Typhoon Preservation Group (HTPG) announced during January: "In late 2021, after making stellar progress on the rear fuselage, as well as work having commenced [on] the cockpit section at the Aircraft Restoration Company, Duxford, the ongoing effect of world events had a slowing effect on the project's ability to raise the funds required to continue the physical rebuild. And so, at the end of 2021, the rebuild was paused.

"However, after several months of behind the scenes work by Hawker Typhoon Preservation Group team, and two years of fundraising, we are delighted to announce that the rebuild of RB396 is back on track."

This news means June 6, 2024, the 80th anniversary of D-Day, is a tentative, yet realistic, target for the completion of the rear fuselage section – which is a "founding" piece of the project.

Bye bye 'Snifter', hello 'Jersey Jerk'

LESS THAN two months after its arrival from Australia, former Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation (CAC) CA-18 Mustang Mk.21 A68-110 (VH-MFT) has been unveiled by Air Leasing and Ultimate Warbird Flights in a new guise at Sywell Aerodrome in Northamptonshire.

A licence-built, now two-seat, dual control, example of the iconic North American type, the 1947-built machine – previously named *Snifter* – had emerged in the colours of P-51D Mustang 44-15152/QI-T *Jersey Jerk*. It was the personal mount Maj Donald J Strait while commanding officer of the United States Army Air Force's 356th Fighter Group 361st Fighter Squadron, based out of Martlesham Heath in Suffolk during late 1944. A pre-war enlisted pilot and Guardsman, Strait flew 122 combat missions to become the 356th's leading scorer with 13.5 'kills'.

Initially flying Republic P-47 Thunderbolts, he christened his aeroplanes *Jersey Jerk* in reference to the state he grew up in after finding that the name he had wanted (*Jersey Bounce*) was already taken. Reluctant to include the word 'Jerk' in the name, he relented

after his crew chief told him: "Sir, let me tell you why we want to name it that. Any guy that would take off in a single engine airplane, cross the North Sea in the wintertime and take a chance of getting

his ass shot off by the Luftwaffe or by anti-aircraft fire has got to be a jerk!"

Owned by Fighter Aviation, *Jersey Jerk* will join the Ultimate Warbird Flights fleet in due course.



Darren Harbar Photography

Cirrus delivers 500th Vision jet, updates SR22



CIRRUS DESIGN has delivered its 500th SF50 Vision Very Light Jet to a customer in Knoxville, Tennessee. The Vision has been in production since 2016 and has been upgraded several times, including an emergency Autoland system introduced in 2020.

The SF50 G2+, which was announced in 2021, featured improved take-off performance and WiFi capability.

A Limited Edition Vision has been announced with a special 500th colour scheme. Cirrus has also improved its SR22 as the SR Series G7 with a high technology cockpit incorporating touch screens and a redesigned and lighter cabin giving improved legroom.

Embraer delivers 1,600th Ipanema

BRAZILIAN MANUFACTURER Embraer has delivered its 1,600th Ipanema agricultural aircraft and reports increased demand with 65 delivered in 2023 – an 18% increase on the previous year.

First produced in 1970, the low-wing Ipanema is powered by a 300hp Lycoming IO-540 engine. The current EMB-203,

introduced in 2020, is manufactured by Embraer's Neiva subsidiary at Botucatu to the west of Sao Paulo and the majority of deliveries are to companies serving Brazil's thriving agricultural industry.

A number of Ipanemas have been converted to fly on ethanol and some are in service with the Brazilian Air Force as glider tugs.



Van's restructuring



IN THE December 2023 issue of *Aviation News*, we reported on the financial crisis at Van's Aircraft and suspension of deliveries of the US company's kits and aircraft parts.

Following a financial reorganisation, Van's has resumed customer deliveries, but with substantial increases in prices. At least 65% of customers have accepted the new pricing and deliveries are taking place. However, Van's is also having to replace aluminium parts that are reported to be defective due to faulty laser-cut holes.

UAE Aerobatic and UPRT firsts



ACTIONFLIGHT has partnered with Ras Al Khaimah International Airport to become the first UAE General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) approved commercial aerobatic flight operator in the UAE, marking a significant milestone for aviation enthusiasts in the United Arab Emirates and beyond.

ActionFlight/Vertical UPRT has also become the first commercial air operator to offer pilots Upset Prevention and Recovery

Training (UPRT) in the UAE. The move follows a recent GCAA regulatory mandate prompted by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in 2019.

The regulation mandates that professional pilots undergo advanced theoretical and 'on aircraft' flight training, equipping pilots with the essential skills to identify and mitigate in-flight dangers and ensuring they possess the necessary competencies for effective recovery from aircraft upsets.



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An aviation Smörgåsbord

▲ The museum charts more than 100 years of military aviation in Sweden
Steve Kilvington

Gary Morris visited Malmen Air Base to sample one of Europe's best aviation museums – Sweden's Flygvapenmuseum

The Flygvapenmuseum – located at the historic Malmen Air Base in Malmö – is the official museum of the Swedish Air Force. The airfield currently hosts the Swedish Armed Forces Helicopter Wing and the Air Force Flying School; at the time of our visit there were several Saab SK.60s in the circuit flying sorties ahead of the type's impending retirement.

The museum is part of the National Swedish Museums of Military History (SFHM) and houses a unique collection of military aircraft and other objects with connections to the century-long history of Swedish aviation.

The Army Aviation Company was stationed at Malmen between 1916 and 1926, followed by the Third Air Corps from 1926 to 1936, and later the Royal Östgöta Air Wing, F 3, which remained until 1974. During the early part of the 20th century, two wing commanders at Royal Östgöta Air Wing, Colonel Gösta von Porat

and Colonel Hugo Beckhammar, put in place the beginnings of the current museum – they obtained permission to allow for the preservation of some decommissioned Swedish Air Force aircraft in one of the base barracks. When it opened in 1951, the F 3 wing museum began with 11 preserved aircraft.

Over the years, the collection of aircraft continued to grow and, during 1977, the municipality of Linköping funded and built a new hangar in Ryd. The Östergötland Aviation Historical Society (ÖFS), that was founded ten years earlier continued to contribute to the maintenance and preservation of the collection's aircraft and the operation of the museum. The Air Force Museum was then formally established and was incorporated into SFHM.

The following year, a decision was made to build a brand-new museum building on the present site of the museum. Construction began during the winter of 1982, and the building was completed and formally



Feature | Swedish Air Force Museum

Airborne Exhibition Hall		
Reg'n	Type	Code/Markings
2	Caproni S.16 (Full Scale Model)	[10]
4	Albatros B.II (SK.1)	
10	Donnet-Leveque L.II	
15	Thulin G	
80	Schneider DFS 108-14 Schulgleiter SG-38 (Se101)	
155	Junkers JU-86K (B.3C-2)	[A]
278	Gloster G.37 Gladiator Mk.II	[H]
386	Fokker C.V-E	[86]
714	Hawker Hart B4A	[M]
814	Sparmann S.1-A	[8-61]
945	Macchi M.7	[951]
947	Phoenix D.III	
2134	Seversky EP-106(J9)	[3-53]
2340	Caproni-Reggiane Re.2000 (J-20)	[40]
2543	Fiat CR.42	[9]
3656	CVM O1 Tummelisa	
3815	Fieseler Fi 156C-3 Storch	[3-67]
5536	Raab Katzenstien RK.26	[1-101]
8316	Jacobs DFS 108-30 Kranich	
16109	Noorduyn AT-16 Harvard IIB	[10-82]
17005	SAAB B.17BL	[3-5]
18172	SAAB B.18B	[14-D]
21286	SAAB J.21A-21R	[7-N]
21364	SAAB J.21A-3	[6-R]
22280	FFVS J22B	[3-L]
25000	Hagglund/Bucker Bu.181B-1 Bestmann(SK25)	[8-76]
26020	North American P-51D Mustang	[16-A]
50046	SAAB SB.91B Safir	[5-46]
3	Nyrop Monoplane	
801-42	SAAB-Scania MFI-9B Trainer	
B1	Breguet CU1	[55]
M-1	Nieuport 4G	
SE-CLZ	Noorduyn Tp78 Norseman	[78001/2]
SE-EGB	Focke-Wulf FW.44J Stieglitz	[670/5-60]
SE-SAM	Heinkel HD.35	[66]

The museum is located close to Malmen Air Base and Saab's manufacturing plants at Linköping. Its main hall opened in 1984
Steve Kilvington





▲ The world’s sole Junkers Ju 86 – a former Swedish example that flew until 1955 – is housed in the museum’s Airborne exhibition Steve Kilvington

“The museum collection in 2024 comprises more than 240 aircraft and 44 helicopters”

► Just two fighter aircraft types have been successfully converted from piston-powered to jet-powered variants – the Saab 21 and the Yakovlev Yak-15. The Flygvapenmuseum has both Daimler-Benz DB605 and de Havilland Goblin-powered versions of the Swedish-built type Steve Kilvington

opened two years later. During 1989, a further museum hall was added.

In 2010, the museum was reopened after another period of refurbishment, with several more buildings and purpose-built facilities for a restaurant, archive room and library to consolidate as many of the museum’s artefacts in one location. New exhibitions were introduced depicting the history of Swedish military aviation, from the pioneer era through the decades of the Cold War, when the Swedish Air Force was considered one of the world’s strongest, through to modern day aviation.

The museum collection in 2024 comprises more than 240 aircraft and 44 helicopters either on display, in store or loaned to other collections throughout Sweden and Europe, together with some 65,000 individual artefacts including aircraft spare parts, vehicles, engines, uniforms and many other items related to the history of the Swedish Air Force.

There are two main halls containing aircraft as well as a basement area. The Airborne exhibition hall is the largest and presents Swedish military aviation in the

In case of War Hall

Reg'n	Type	Code/Markings
215	WSK-Mielec Lim-2	
2406	Sud Aviation/SAAB SE.3130 Alouette II (Hkp2)	[92]
3306	Agusta-Bell 204B (Hkp3C)	[46]
4064	Boeing-Vertol 107-II-15 (Hkp4B)	[64]
28001	English Electric J28A Vampire	[3-P]
29970	Saab S29C Tunnan	
32197	SAAB A32A Lansén	[6-21]
34016	Hawker Hunter F.50	
35375	SAAB Draken J35D	[4-05]
35410	SAAB Draken J35F	[3]
37108	SAAB Viggen AJS-37	[10-55]
39813	SAAB Gripen JAS-39B	
47001	Canadian-Vickers PBV-1 Canso A	[79]
60113	Saab Sk60A	[5-113]
83008	Hunting Percival P.66 Pembroke C.52 (Tp83)	[11-08]
210-1	SAAB 210	
HS964	Supermarine Spitfire PR.XIX	[31051/11-51]
SE-DCD	De Havilland DH.112 Venom FB.51 (J33)	[33025/1-E]

Basement

Reg'n	Type	Code/Markings
79001	Douglas C-47-DL	None

External display

Reg'n	Type	Code/Markings
52002	English Electric Canberra B.2 (Tp 52)	[8-02]
79007	Douglas C-47A-25-DK	[13-797]
82001	Vickers V.668 Varsity T.1(Tp82)	[8-80]
85172	Sud Aviation SE.210 Caravelle III	[13-851]

first half of the 20th century, from its first pioneers and the establishment of the air force through to the advent of jet aircraft. Walking through the hall, the aircraft are portrayed in themes in chronological order starting with earliest aircraft through titled areas: The Art of Flight, In Times of War and Peace and Flight Safety – which transport the visitor through to the post-war area.



► British types are very well represented at the museum, with around a dozen aircraft designed and developed by UK manufacturers in the collection; among them a ski-equipped Gloster Gladiator Mk.II Gary Morris



This area contains a large number of locally produced and operated aircraft, such as piston and jet-powered versions of the Saab 21, a Seversky EP-106 (the export version of the P-35), a CVM Ö1 Tummelisa, and examples of the British-built Hawker Hart and Gloster Gladiator. One particularly interesting and extremely rare aircraft preserved is the sole surviving example of the Junkers Ju 86 bomber. Despite a number of aircraft being built under licence in Sweden, the preserved aircraft was built in Germany as a Ju.86K model and sold to Sweden in 1938, where it served with the Swedish Air Force until retirement in 1958.

The next hall, named In Case of War, depicts the aircraft operated during a time when the world was characterised by tensions between East and West and when Sweden invested heavily in its own defence. The aircraft are displayed in small, grouped areas organised by decade with a number suspended from the ceiling and walls as well as the hall floor.

Aircraft such as the Saab 210 'Lildraken', WSK-Mielec Lim-2, J 28A Vampire, Hunting Percival P.66 Pembroke C.52 (Tp83) and Boeing-Vertol 107-II-15 (Hkp4B), plus

other operated helicopters can be found on display alongside more modern jets such as Saab JAS 39B Gripen and Saab AJS 37 Viggen.

The final display hall can be found in the basement and is titled Secret Documents – The DC-3 that disappeared. In 2005, the Air Force Museum was tasked by the Swedish government with preserving the wreckage of the DC-3, 79001, which was shot down by Soviet fighter aircraft over the Baltic Sea in 1952. On June 13 that year, during the height of the Cold War, the DC-3 departed from Bromma airport near Stockholm on an electronic intelligence gathering mission over the Baltic Sea. After several hours, communication with the aircraft was suddenly lost. No trace of the aircraft could be found apart from a few small items and traces of Soviet ammunition. A search for the missing aircraft was launched, which resulted in a Consolidated Catalina being attacked by a Soviet MiG-15 and forced to land. The Soviet Union denied any involvement in the loss until 1991. The wreckage was finally located in June 2003 and salvaged and the DC-3 was recovered and placed on display in the basement of the new

▲ The wreckage of Douglas Tp 79, 79001 (c/n 9001), has been displayed as it was found at the bottom of the Baltic Sea. The aircraft was shot down by Soviet MiG-15 fighters on June 13, 1952. However, the USSR denied responsibility for the loss of the aircraft for 41 years Steve Kilvington





◀ Saab’s vast range of fighters is well represented, including the in-service JAS 39 Gripen Matt Sudol

Under restoration		
Reg'n	Type	Code/Markings
29969	Saab S29C Tunnan	[3-16]
35539	SAAB Draken J35F	[10-39]
NC79901	Grumman G-21 Goose	

Storage site		
Reg'n	Type	Code/Markings
83	Dornier 27 A-4	[57273/83]
1001	Vertol 44 (HKP1)	[01]
3422	Agusta-Bell 204B (Hkp3B)	[92-10]
5221	Hughes 269C (Hkp5B)	[21]
6274	Agusta-Bell 206A JetRanger (Hkp6A)	[74]
9209	Bolkow 105CB (Hkp9A)	[09]
9217	Bolkow 105CB (Hkp9A)	[17]
28451	De Havilland DH.115 Vampire T.55 (J28C)	[5-81]
29398	Saab J29B Tunnan	[22-F]
29487	Saab J29B Tunnan	[3-07]
29507	Saab J29F Tunnan	[3-53]
32541	SAAB J32E Lansen	[3-06]
32605	SAAB J32B Lansen	
32917	SAAB S32C Lansen	[11-17]
35811	SAAB Draken Sk35C	[10-80]
37449	SAAB Viggen JA-37DI	[4-49]
50051	SAAB SB.91B Safir	[13-72]
60091	Saab Sk60B	[5-91]
660122	Composite Engineering BQM-167	
A20-233	CAC CA-7 Wirraway Mk.II	[610/5-110]
SE-AYC	SAAB SB.91A Safir	[91104/8-4]
SE-BFI	De Havilland DH.60T Tiger Moth	[5558/58]
SE-BYM	De Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth (ASJA)	[515/5-19]
SE-CAS	Gloster Meteor T.7	
SE-CPI	SAAB MFI-10B Vipen	[54382/82]
SE-GHA	Mitsubishi MU-2B-25	
SE-KAE	Nord NC.702 Martinet (Si-204A)	
SE-SAP	Schneider DFS 108-49 Grunau Baby IIb-2	
SE-SDL	Jacobs DFS 108-70 Olympia Meise	
SE-STP	Jacobs DFS 108-30 Kranich	[8313]
SE-SWN	Jacobs DFS 108-30 Kranich	[8211]
SE-XCB	SAAB MFI-15 Supporter	

Note. All aircraft details and locations correct as of author's visit

museum hall with a very interesting timeline of the history of the aircraft, its final flight and ultimate loss. A replacement for the lost aircraft was purchased in 1953 in the form of a single Vickers Varsity, designation Tp82 in Swedish service, and this aircraft, 82001 (c/n 622), also survives in preservation at the museum. A number of larger aircraft such as the Vickers Varsity (Tp82), English Electric Canberra B.2 (Tp52), Douglas C-47A-25-DK, and Sud Aviation SE.210 Caravelle III are located outside in the museum grounds. Alongside the museum is the small workshop area where the restoration of aircraft takes place. During our visit, this contained Grumman G-21 Goose, NC79901 (c/n B-63), which although it never served with the Swedish Air Force, on completion it will be painted to represent an aircraft of the Swedish Air Force. Outside the workshop were a Saab 29 Tunnan and Saab 35 Draken; the later has since been moved to the new aircraft hall and placed on display suspended from the ceiling. With the museum having a large number of aircraft in its inventory and care, only a smaller amount can be displayed in the museum halls, the remainder being held at the museum storage site or loaned to other museums. A short drive from the main museum and airfield, the storage site is located in a large hangar on a separate secure military site. At the time of our visit, the hangar contained around 35 aircraft, helicopters and historical gliders. As the storage is in a secure military area, it is not open to the public.

“Alongside the museum is the small workshop area where the restoration of aircraft takes place”

▼ This Sud Aviation Caravelle III is among the largest exhibits on display Matt Sudol





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Ready

for tonight and tomorrow

Joe Champion discovers how 336 Squadron of the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf) plans to provide combat support while preparing for a brand-new aircraft type



The 'Black Bulls' of 336 Squadron, Royal Netherlands Air Force RNLAf, are currently transitioning from the Lockheed Martin C-130H to the Embraer MC-390.

Overseeing this transformation is the air arm's new commander, Lt Gen André 'Jabba' Steur, who is ensuring the squadron lives up to its motto: 'Fight tonight, fight tomorrow, fight together'.

Recent Action

The Black Bulls currently operate four Lockheed Martin C-130Hs: two C-130H-30s, G-273 (c/n 382-5273) and G-275 (c/n 382-5275), and two C-130Hs, G-781 (c/n 382-4781) and G-988 (c/n 382-4988). The unit comprises 14 pilots (with four more in training at the time of writing), 18 loadmasters and 16 flight engineers. Multiple upgrades have taken place to ensure these airframes remain as up to date as possible in the modern theatre, with others due. Recent modifications include the installing of

a Mode 5 identification, friend or foe (IFF) system, while the squadron's four Hercules are set to receive a SATURN anti-jam tactical radio in place of the existing Have Quick II unit – the first aircraft having been upgraded in November. The squadron is also in the process of improving its self-protection systems, including a new feature known as Hostile Firing Indications (HFI) to enable the detection of incoming projectiles. Furthermore, the aircraft's radar jammers have been better protected in the current EW spectrum, but 336 was unable to share any further details due to security concerns.

The squadron's mission to provide air mobility to the Netherlands and partner nations' armed forces mean it must be capable of deploying on demand to provide combat support and combat service support. In the last two years, it has provided air logistical support of cargo to Eastern Europe, as well as

▲ The oldest examples in the RNLAf's current cadre of C-130s were delivered in 1994 and 1995, while two C-130Hs – remanufactured former USAF EC-130Qs – were delivered in 2010 All images author unless stated





participating in disaster relief operations following the devastating earthquakes in Turkey in February 2023, providing aeromedical evacuation support. It also transported relief goods to Sint Maarten in 2017 and repatriated Dutch nationals after the Caribbean island was battered by Hurricane Irma. Additionally, it has assisted in evacuating civilians from warzones like Kabul in Afghanistan and Khartoum in Sudan, as well as deploying to Mali for six months during 2022 in support of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Israel and Lebanon

Following the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, 336 Squadron anticipated a high likelihood of another potential non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO), realising the importance of an agile and swift response. Intelligence officers attached to the squadron immediately went to work gathering the required information needed to make sense of the chaotic situation. Within two days the unit had activated their Mission Planning Cell (MPC). The MPC produces intelligence, identifies tactical problems and finds solutions by developing a concept of operations (CONOPS). Furthermore, the MPC is tasked with providing a common operating picture to the aircrews, enabling them to quickly plan and execute their missions.

The initial goal was to produce a CONOPS for several scenarios within a time span of 48 hours, focusing on potential evacuations from both Israel and Lebanon using tactical airlift capacity. This process aimed at delivering several options, enabling higher command to make decisions faster. This led to the shortening of the amount of time required to deploy a joint task force (JTF) in the case of non-foreseeable operations, such as a NEO, with the unit now ready to execute missions in Israel and Lebanon within 72 hours. The operations order was released by the Dutch high command the following week, giving the green light for the squadron to deploy to Cyprus with two C-130s.

▲ Recent commitments have included delivering aid to Turkey and non-combatant evacuation operations in Sudan and Mali

Once in Cyprus, the MPC was fully operational after only 4 hours. This meant it was able to secretly communicate with coalition forces, Netherlands high command and other Dutch units in the region. In addition, it was capable of sharing high value intelligence and, most importantly, plan missions to provide an 80% solution to the tactical problem at hand. Once crews report for duty, the MPC chief provides them with a mission brief, whereafter they finish their planning by focusing on the last 20%. This enables the crews to have maximum rest, optimising the time available for a prolonged mission execution.

It is important to point out that the MPC at Cyprus did not merely consist of 336 squadron personnel, but also other subject matter experts assigned to the Dutch JTF.

Future tactical airlift

Aligning with Gen Steur's vision, there is significant change ahead for 336 Sqn. It involves embracing new doctrinal and tactical concepts, such as agile combat employment (ACE) – the US Air Force's evolving operational strategy necessitated by advances in adversary reconnaissance and weapons capabilities – and with the C-130H reaching the end of its life with the RNLAF. After 45



An RNLAF C-130H follows the River Meuse south between Heerewaarden and Kerkdriel while on a low-level mission



years in service, the four Hercules will be replaced by the Embraer MC-390 Millennium. The formal contract has yet to be signed, but it is increasingly likely that, over the next seven years, 336 will expand to 15 crews with five new MC-390s.

Lt Col Diesel, the MC-390 transition team leader, explained why the Brazilian type was chosen: "There are many positives. We can still land on small dirt strips, still drop paras and still fly as tactically as we do now. But the MC-390 will enable us to move the same volume of payload faster and over a greater range."

As an example of this operational efficiency, the current standard load on sorties to Mali comprises five pallets and takes an average of four days turnaround in the C-130H. This time will be halved to two days when operating the MC-390. Currently, developing mission tapes for the self-protection systems of the C-130H took a long time. Electromagnetic warfare (EW) technology is changing at a fast pace and near peer opposition may outpace the unit if this continues. Elbit delivers in-country reprogramming (ICR) labs that, in theory, should enable the unit to update their MC-390 mission tapes within a day.

The RNLAF's acquisition of the Millennium is the first instance of the type being referred to as the MC-390. Diesel noted: "It's not just a tanker-transport, but so much more. Since it is so versatile in its capabilities, it should be designated MC-390. For example, the Leonardo weather radar also has a SAR mapping capability, while the Rafael Litening 5 electro-optical (EO) sensor allows for pattern-of-life assessments. In addition, the existing aeromedical evacuation capability will be upgraded with sophisticated onboard patient care equipment.

So there is a significant increase in capabilities being added to the Armed Forces of the Netherlands, making this aircraft a true 'Swiss army knife'."

Mastering the Millennium

The squadron's future focus will be on mastering the multi-mission capabilities of the MC-390. This includes functions such as tactical air-to-air refuelling, both buddy-buddy and for receivers like special operations forces (SOF) helicopters, pattern-of-life assessment of an objective area and communications relay for SOF ground forces. Most importantly, by employing the MC-390 as a multi-mission aircraft, the ability to provide airlift is not sacrificed when it is combined with other capabilities. The MC-390's versatility positions the squadron to deliver various roles in one single mission set, contributing to their adaptability and

▲ RNLAF Lockheed C-130H, G-275 (c/n 382-5275), banks over 's-Hertogenbosch on its way back to Eindhoven

▼ The four-strong C-130 fleet will begin to be phased out following the delivery of a second MC-390





▲ In all, five MC-390s are set to be delivered from 2027 Embraer

▼ A RNLAf F-35A flies behind one of the air arm's C-130Hs

effectiveness to deploy agile and on-call airlift, aligning with the 'fight tonight' motto. The current expected timeline is for the first aircraft to be delivered in 2027, with entry-into-service six months later after build-in of the government furnished equipment. After delivery of the second MC-390, the C-130s will be phased out.

In preparation for this, new simulators will arrive prior to the aircraft. Furthermore, the MC-390 transition team will head abroad in 2024 for the qualification and instructor training on type. Thereafter, this team will start designing the new

mission qualification training programme, with the goal of developing tactical operating procedures and other building blocks to shape a military approved training organisation (MATO). The MC-390 MATO must be able to produce crews who are qualified to perform airland and airdrop missions, both at night and in a degraded visual environment with threats. Moreover, these crews must also develop new skills, such as air-to-air refuelling, proficiency in the use of a complex communications suite and handling of the EO sensor.

The unit's commanding officer, Lt Col 'Mental', arrived in late September 2023. Speaking to *Aviation News*, he said: "As the new commander of the 'Black Bulls', I see a growing need for units operating in the tactical airlift domain. To be able to fight tonight and tomorrow, as Lt Gen Steur envisions, we need advanced aircraft equipped with modern technology and [advanced] self-protection systems operated by highly trained multi-capable airmen through a top-tier training programme, to meet the constantly changing demands of tactical air lift in the modern theatre."

When asked what those demands are, 'Mental' replied: "We may need to deploy to a country that has been hit by a natural disaster one week, but then the next week, evacuate high-end personnel out of a country that is under attack or perform a non-foreseeable special operations mission. This requires a dedicated and flexible mindset and, most importantly, it involves forming a cohesive team to achieve integrated effects with our partners to get the job done."

Without doubt, 336 Squadron and its personnel need to be aware and ready for any task it receives, even if that means 'fighting tonight'. The unit is constantly training its personnel in multiple disciplines of flying, by attending and organising multinational exercises to interact with those who will require its capabilities most in the battlespace whenever they 'fight together'. And finally, staying agile and updating its current platform while simultaneously sourcing and procuring its replacement, so the unit is ready to 'fight tomorrow'.

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The Army Flying Museum tells the extraordinary story of the British Army in the air from the pioneering days of balloons and kites, to the Glider Pilot Regiment during World War Two, right through to modern helicopter operations. The Museum's collections of artefacts, medals and over thirty five fixed wing and rotary aircraft, together with imaginative displays and a clever use of interactives and video, provide a fascinating insight into the history of British Army flying. A Memorial in the Museum grounds commemorates more than 5,000 that have died in the service of British Army flying from early pioneers to modern Army Air Corps.

The Army Flying Museum is open daily from 9am to 4.00pm and offers guided tours, educational sessions, outreach workshops, family- friendly activities, a popular lecture programme (both online and in person) and a varied events calendar, including its flagship fundraising event, Wallop Wheels & Wings, every July.

For front row seats of aircraft in action, including the HAAF, look no further than the Museum's Apache Café which overlooks the airfield and is open daily from 9am to 3.30pm with no need for Museum admission. It is a great spot to enjoy a tea or coffee and a slice of delicious homemade cake and enjoy the view, or treat yourself to breakfast, lunch, or a light snack.

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Widebody ap

▲ The Boeing 777X programme scored a combined 100 orders from Air India and Emirates last year – its first new commitments for some time, while Turkish Airlines looks likely to place an order for the type during 2024
Dirk Grothe/Mimages

If 2023 proved anything, it was that there is high demand for airliners. While narrowbodies dominate sales, widebodies regained popularity after the slump during the pandemic years. **Richard Schuurman** explains what is driving this uptick

It is four years since global air travel came to an abrupt standstill in March and April 2020 after a new virus called COVID-19 became a superspreader. Airlines parked aircraft by the hundreds and the outlook was grim. The first victims? Widebodies, as long-haul travel collapsed almost overnight. IATA and others predicted that it would take at least until 2024 and 2025 before the industry would recover to 2019 levels.

But that recovery has happened much quicker. While widebody flight hours were just ten hours a month in April 2020, three years later in April 2023, they had recovered to between 70 and 90 hours. The most active? The Boeing 787, which racked up almost 90 hours per aeroplane, ahead of the Airbus A350 and Boeing 777 at 80 hours per month and the A330 at 70 hours, data from *Aviation Week* showed.

Since then, the recovery has only continued. In November, global revenue passenger kilometres (RPKs) were trailing 2019 levels by only 0.9%, although international traffic was 5.5% behind. For 2024, IATA predicts that global passenger traffic will exceed 2019 by 5-14% while 2025 could see traffic up by 13 to 27%.

That means airlines need aircraft again. For long-haul, these are widebodies, although Airbus will tell you it

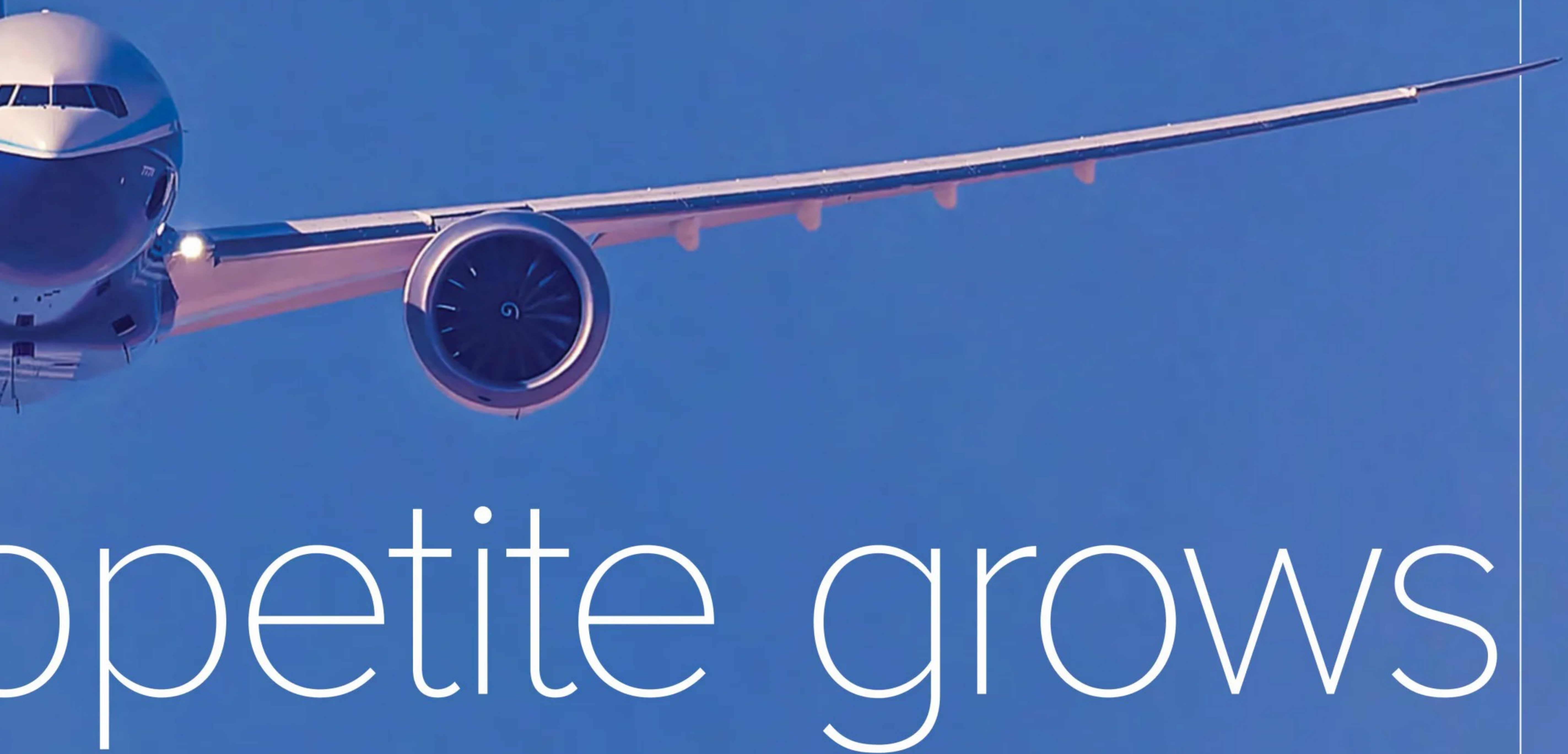
can offer the A321XLR narrowbody with widebody range. However, airlines don't need aircraft just for growth, but also for fleet replacement. In the next few years, first-generation 777s and A330s are nearing retirement age. That means there are plenty of opportunities for sales teams.

2023 orders

Excluding military variants, in 2023, Boeing received gross orders for 429 passenger widebodies (787 and 777X) and ten freighters (777F). This compares with 217 in 2022, 116 in 2021, 52 in 2020 (both COVID years) and 162 in 2019. Boeing doesn't specify 2023 net orders by type.

For Airbus, the past year marked a sharp recovery with 337 gross orders for the A330neo and A350, including freighters but excluding A330 tankers. After deleting all Iran Air orders, that makes 278 net widebody orders. That's a huge difference to 2022 when net orders stood at -79 for passenger aircraft. Only the sale of 24 A350Fs gave Airbus something to smile about. For 2021, the net score was 32, for 2020 -25 and for 2019 51 after clearing the A380 backlog.

By type, the 787 was the most popular widebody, but only just. Boeing received gross orders for 313



Appetite grows

Dreamliners against Airbus's 300 for the A350. Net unfilled orders stand at 799 Dreamliners and 621 A350s.

Boeing's December orders included 45 787-9s for an unidentified customer while Qantas confirmed 12 Dreamliners, including eight -10s as a new variant for the airline. In October, United placed a follow-on order for 50 Dreamliners, on top of the 100 ordered in December 2022. Saudia (39), Riyadh Air (39) and Air Canada (18) also placed sizeable orders during the year. Azerbaijan Airlines (eight), Lufthansa (seven), British Airways (six), and Emirates (five) complemented previous orders. The 787-9 remained the best-selling variant with 234 gross orders, ahead of the Dash 10 at 65, and the 787-8 at 14.

One of the reasons that Emirates reinstated the 787-10 in its backlog after ditching the type in 2019 in preference for the -9 is that Boeing has hiked the maximum take-off weight (MTOW). An extra 6.4 tons gives the -10 another 430nm range. MTOW for the -9 is also up by 4.6 tons and adds 310nm of range. For Emirates, this means the 787-10 can operate on 85% of its network, which makes it the better choice over the 787-9, Emirates president Sir Tim Clark said in November.

For Air France-KLM, the additional range of the 787-10 wasn't sufficient to tip the scale in favour of Boeing. Instead, it ordered 50 Airbus A350-900s and -1000s for both airlines plus 40 purchase rights. During Investor Day in December, executive vice-president

“In 2023, Boeing received gross orders for 429 passenger widebodies”



◀ The Airbus A350 and A330neo account for 621 and 175 orders from the manufacturer's backlog of 8,598 aircraft Airbus



of strategy, Angus Clarke, explained why: “Airbus won the latest tender based on net present value, so that was straightforward. Also, without the option to overfly Russia to Asia, we must circumnavigate Russia. The A350-900 has 2.5 hours more range than a high-gross weight 787-10. So in the end, it became an easy decision.”

Clarke added: “The A350 will absolutely be the dominant future of Air France-KLM, like what the 737 is to Ryanair. Everything works, the price is good, fuel burn is good, that aircraft cannot do anything wrong, in my opinion.”

While not an immediate factor in its choice, Air France-KLM must like that the A350-1000 will benefit from a three-ton higher MTOW to 322 tons to give it 180nm extra range. The Franco-Dutch order is evident in the 2023 sales of the A350, with 148 net orders for the -900, 118 for the -1000 and 15 for the freighter. A350-1000 buyers included EVA Air (18), Qantas (12), Lufthansa (ten) and Philippine Airlines (nine), while 23 for Qatar Airways were reinstated after the airline and Airbus ended their legal dispute over the paint quality issue. A350-900 customers included EgyptAir (ten), Emirates (15), and an undisclosed customer for ten. The A330neo continued to sell slowly with 35 -900s and just one -800, but Airbus deleted 29 -900s for Iran Air from the backlog.

Some airlines bet on two horses. Ethiopian Airlines ordered 11 more 787-9s (plus 15 options) and 11 A350-

900s in November. In June, Air India finalised an order for 20 787-9s plus 20 options and ten 777-9s, as well as 40 A350-900s and -1000s. At the time of writing, Turkish Airlines had ordered 70 A350s of all versions and secured 20 purchase rights, but it still needs to confirm a similar bumper order with Boeing. Based on what CEO Ahmet Bolat said in June, this could include some 80 787s and ten to 15 777Xs as Turkish unfolds its 2033 strategy.

777X selling well again

From a sales perspective, 2023 was a good year for the 777X, even without the Turkish Airlines order. Air India’s commitment for ten was followed up by 90 from Emirates at the Dubai Airshow in November, split between 55 additional 777-9s and 35 777-8s. The order was a welcome one for Boeing as, for some time, Emirates seemed uncertain about what to do with the 777X. Its original 2013 order for 150 (which at one time became 156 before dropping to 115) was in doubt. The November order brings the backlog to 170 -9s and 35 -8s, making Emirates by far the biggest operator of the type.

While the 777-9 is Sir Tim Clark’s favourite, thanks to what he calls its unprecedented efficiencies, he always remained keen on getting the -8, even when Boeing was uncertain when to launch it and prioritised the -8F freighter in 2022. The passenger version is now the same length as the freighter (70.86 metres),

► The Boeing 777X orderbook currently stands at 453 commitments, 205 of which are from Emirates
Dirk Grothe/Vimages

“I see no signs, no signals that there isn’t a sustained demand for widebodies going forward”



◀ Orders for the Airbus A330neo have been relatively slow compared with the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. However, many airlines continue to operate the first-generation A330 and will be poised to replace the type in the coming years
Airbus



Delta Air Lines has now ordered both variants of the Airbus A350 – the baseline -900 model and the larger -1000. Currently, United Airlines is the only other North American carrier to have placed an order for the widebody, but there is uncertainty regarding whether the Chicago-based airline will ever receive them owing to its combined orders for 221 Boeing 787 Dreamliners Airbus

The 787 Dreamliner has been beset by delivery delays and quality control issues, but Boeing plans to double production from five to ten between 2025 and 2026 Boeing



which adds 11 seats to a two-class configuration to make 395 seats total.

The net order backlog now stands at 453 – 43 777-8s, 55 -8Fs and 355 -9s. John Dyson, head of product marketing for the 777X, is confident sales will keep their momentum: “We see this aircraft as the perfect, ideal fit for that marketplace. There are over 1,700 777s flying out there today, A340s and 747s that it will need to replace; this is the only airplane that can replace them. The only thing that can replace a 777 is a 777,” he told *Aviation News* at the Dubai Airshow.

While the backlog includes many major airlines, US carriers are absent. Dyson is not concerned: “I would say US airlines were also late adopters of the -300ER. In the core market they are flying, the 787 fits in now. But if you look at emissions, NOx per seat and the lower noise going into places like London Heathrow or Amsterdam, you are going to need to have the per-seat advantage. There is no other airplane in the marketplace to deliver that than the 777-9 and -8.”

Boeing hopes to receive Type Inspection Authorisation (TIA) soon so that it can finally start certification flight testing. On January 25, it was four years since the 777-9 made her first flight. As regulators required the redesign of certain control

hardware and software, certification consistently was pushed to the right. Boeing hopes to deliver the first 777-9 sometime during the first months of 2025.

Both Boeing and Airbus are confident of the widebody market. “I see widebodies continuing to do really, really well in 2024. I see no signs, no signals that there isn’t a sustained demand for widebodies going forward,” said Christian Scherer, since January CEO of Airbus Commercial Aircraft, during a media call. This was confirmed a day later, when Delta announced a (long anticipated) order for 20 A350-1000s plus 20 options.

The result is that Airbus is sold out on the A350 through 2028 and Boeing probably even longer on the 787. The answer is ramping up production. The A350 will go to ten aircraft per month in 2026 with the A330neo to four this year. Boeing is at five Dreamliners right now, but intends to double to ten per month in 2025-2026. President and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Stan Deal, has said he wants to see sustained demand before Boeing will commit to a further ramp-up, which could get it to pre-pandemic levels of 14 a month. Production of the 777X resumed in Q4 last year and together with the 777F stands at three aircraft per month.

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Italy hands over the reins

▲ A quartet of Eurofighter F-2000s from the Italian Air Force's 37 Stormo was deployed on Baltic Air Policing duties between early August and late November
Alex van Noije

Joris van Boven and **Alex van Noije** report from Lithuania as the Belgian Air Component becomes the latest Baltic Air Policing lead nation, taking on the role from the Italian Air Force

Since Russia invaded Ukraine two years ago, tensions along Europe's easternmost borders have escalated. In response, NATO has scaled up as a protective organization – its responsibilities have grown from the initial Baltic Air Policing (BAP) mission, which started in March 2004, and the Icelandic Air Policing mission which began four years later in May 2008.

The current Baltic Air Policing detachment at Šiauliai, Lithuania, is led by the Belgian Air Component and began on November 30, 2023,

having taken the mission on from the Italian Air Force. The Belgians are assisted in the mission by the French Air and Space Force which has deployed four Mirage 2000-5Fs to cover the Enhanced Air Policing (eAP) tasking for the northern region.

Colonel Pierre Gaudillière, a spokesperson for the French joint defence staff and a former French Air Force fast jet pilot, explained: "Here at Šiauliai there is space for both the lead and support nation. The lead nation uses the hangars and squadron building close to the head of the runway while the supporting



▼ The Belgian and French detachment commanders are presented with tokens of appreciation from the Lithuanian Ministry of Defence French Air and Space Force



nation is located halfway along the runway in a complex next to the control tower.”

He continued: “Our Mirage 2000-5F unit [Escadre de Chasse 1/2 ‘Cigognes’] is well prepared to take over this mission from the Italians. The unit is tasked with the same air defence mission at Luxeuil as it will be in Lithuania. The Mirage deployment was supported by an Airbus A330 MRTT Phenix tanker and, during the flight, we also assisted the Finnish Air Force’s air shielding training by refueling their F/A-18 Hornets. This demonstrates just how flexible the units within NATO are.”

The Italian detachment

The outgoing Italian detachment had been led by Colonel Federico Sacco Maino who is also a very experienced Eurofighter F-2000A pilot. The Colonel



▲ The French Air and Space Force Airbus A330 MRTT refuelled Finnish Air Force F/A-18s on air shielding training as well as keeping four EC 1/2 ‘Cigognes’ Dassault Mirage 200-5Fs topped up on their way to Lithuania Alex van Noije



▲ Four French Air and Space Force Dassault Mirage 2000-5Fs will support NATO's Enhanced Air Policing mission between November and March Joris van Boven

▼ The 37 Stormo four-ship responded to 35 Alpha Scrambles and intercepted 60 Russian aircraft during their 120-day deployment Alex van Noije

started his career as an F-104 Starfighter pilot in 2001, moving to the F-16 Fighting Falcon in 2004 and to the Tifone in 2008. He has since become an instructor in 2017 and is now flying the EuroJet EJ200-powered fighter as an air defence specialist. He explained: "The Italian Air Force has taken part in Baltic Air Policing missions since 2015. We are here for our fifth tour and it is the second time since 2021 that we have posted fifth generation fighters to the area, with F-35s based at Malbork currently."

The Colonel said that this tour was a busy deployment as the Italians were the only nation at Siauliai between August 3, 2023 and November 30,

and therefore the only unit executing both BAP and eAP missions.

Maino continued: "We have had to take care of the entire mission for 120 days as a single nation. That is pretty a busy job – we brought just four aircraft and fewer than ten pilots from Italy as planned, and we stayed hot for 120 days executing a lot of activities. The overall aim for Italy's participation in BAP missions is to acquire a common security model for NATO airspace and our main objective here is to maintain a full air policing capability while deployed to Lithuania."

The Colonel highlights just how intense a tasking the Italians have had as the only active task force on duty at Šiauliai, stating: "This is probably the biggest number of intercepts that I know of at this place". In total the four-ship had 35 Alpha Scrambles and intercepted 60 Russian aircraft during their 120-day deployment, while the eight Spanish EF-2000s at Ämari had 22 Alpha Scrambles during the same period.

The Belgian detachment

It was a quartet of Belgian F-16s which, almost 20 years ago, started the seamless sequence of allied fighter deployments that have ensured the territorial integrity of the Baltic Allied airspace.

Just hours after the accession of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to NATO, Belgian F-16s arrived at Šiauliai



► Italian detachment commander Colonel Federico Sacco Maino flew the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter and the General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon before moving on to the F-2000A in 2008 Alex van Noije

Air Base on March 30, 2004 to begin the NATO Baltic Air Policing mission safeguarding the region's airspace. Now two decades on, the Belgians are returning for their 12th mission. A detachment from Florennes-based 350 Squadron led by Cdr Petitjean Renaud was handed control as the lead nation from the Italians. The F-2000As have been replaced like-for-like with Vipers, while five pilots and 75 members of ground crew, engineers, mission planners and safety personnel are supporting the posting. This will change for the latter half of the Belgian Air Component's presence in Lithuania, according to Renaud: "The detachment of 350 Sqn from Florennes will do the first two months. After that a detachment from Kleine-Brogel Air Base will conduct the last two months."

Renaud continued, detailing the work up for the BAP tasking: "Our pilots from 350 Sqn attended the Dutch exercise Frisian Flag. It's important to participate in such big exercises because we need to practice our tactics on a large scale. Collaborating with other air forces such as France or Poland for example has therefore become easier for our pilots."

The French detachment

The French Air and Space Force has been a regular contributor to the rotating BAP and eAP missions since their inception and is currently conducting its 11th turn of quick reaction alert (QRA) duty in Lithuania, beginning on November 30, 2023. The current French rotation is succeeding the Italian detachment and will stay for a period of four months on the eAP tasking. The almost 100-strong detachment at Siauliai is led by Lieutenant-Colonel



Georges Abihanna, a very experienced Mirage 2000-5F pilot and commander of Luxeuil-based EC 1/2. As with the Belgian mission, pilots will return to France after two months, with a second wave of pilots – also drawn from EC 1/2 'Cigognes' – relieving them.

NATO's AEW&C Force, based at Geilenkirchen, Germany, will supplement the joint Belgian-French deployment by continuing to operate two Boeing E-3As from Šiauliai. The pair arrived in September, conducting missions to monitor Russian military activity close to the alliance's border.

Acting NATO Spokesperson, Dylan White, commented: "Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has increased our focus on the security environment in the Baltic Sea region. Our AWACS can detect aircraft and missiles hundreds of kilometers away, making them a key early warning capability for NATO. I thank Lithuania for hosting the aircraft as this is an important contribution to our shared security."

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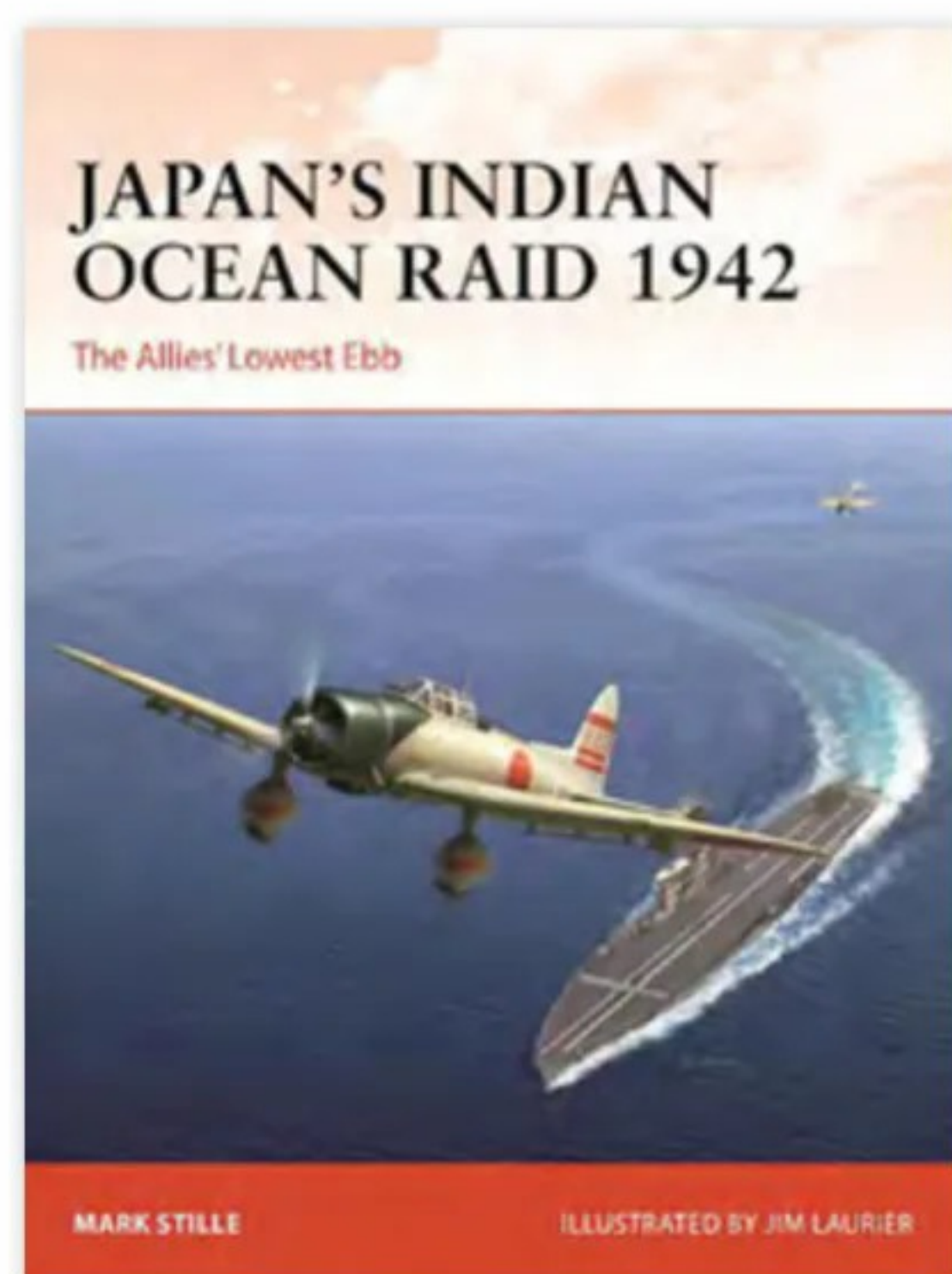


The Belgian Air Component received a snowy reception at Šiauliai Air Base when they arrived for their 12th Baltic Air Policing mission at the end of November Belgian Air Component

Japan's Indian Ocean Raid 1942

After their stunning victories in the Pacific, in April 1942 the aircraft carriers of the Imperial Japanese Navy sortied into the Indian Ocean. They conducted two heavy raids on Ceylon targeting the ports of Colombo and Trincomalee, though fortunately most of the Royal Navy's Eastern Fleet had moved to a remote anchorage. Nonetheless, as well as much merchant shipping, the Japanese aircraft sank an aircraft carrier and two cruisers. Churchill described it as 'the most dangerous moment'. Fortunately, the Japanese withdrew never to return, the possibility of invasion with them. This latest addition to the Osprey 'Campaign' series succinctly and accurately describes both the background of the raid and the attacks themselves. The text is complimented by several detailed maps and schematics that helps the reader's understanding of the action. It is well illustrated, particularly from the Japanese side, though photographic coverage of the British side is disappointing. For example, a photograph of RAF Catalinas in Malaya before the war is used, but an image of the actual RCAF Catalina that discovered the Japanese strike is readily available. Those comments aside, this is a good, inexpensive account of an important action.

Mark Stille, softback, illustrated, 96pgs, £18.99, www.ospreypublishing.com



Target Hong Kong – US Navy pilots at war

After the British colony of Hong Kong fell to the Japanese in December 1941, the enemy garrison was little troubled by Allied action, largely due to the distances involved. This meant the harbour was used largely unhindered as a refuelling stop by sea traffic between the East Indies and Japan – although there were occasional, relatively light attacks by USAAF aircraft based in China. However, heavy raids came on the morning of January 16, 1945, when 138 US Navy aircraft from the five carriers of TF38 (the Fast Carrier Task Force) attacked, followed by another by 158 aircraft in the afternoon. This very well researched and written book details these Operation Gratitude attacks. The American aircraft were faced very heavy anti-aircraft fire that shot down 19 of them. The author examines the rationale and planning for the raid, but the greater part of the book examines the attack in commendable detail. The success of the destruction of a convoy of tankers is well described as are the attacks on the former RAF airfield at Kai Tak. To his credit the author also describes the village that was attacked in error with great loss of civilian life and the losses at an internment camp that was also hit in error. There are extensive endnotes and references, but the narrative would have been enhanced by some maps and an appendix or two detailing the strike force order of battle. Overall, this is a first-class account of a little known episode of World War Two that will appeal to historians on both sides of the Atlantic.

Steven K Bailey, Hardback, Illustrated, 368pgs, £25, www.ospreypublishing.com



Mosquito Intruders – Target Burma

This highly readable account is by the son of a wartime pilot who flew the Mosquito on intruder operations both in Britain and Burma. The story is based on the father's own recollections, diaries and logbook that he kept during the war, but has been woven about the broader picture.

After training, Ben Walsh initially flew Mossies on night intruder duties from England with an RCAF squadron. However, he was then tasked with ferrying some of the first of the 'wooden wonders' to India where he was retained to serve with 27 Squadron as it was re-equipped. The greater proportion of the book therefore details his experiences flying on long-range intruder operations over the jungle-covered hills of Burma.

Although very much a personal account, this book is not parochial – the details are easily woven into the broader context that includes the actions of the men of 45, 47 and 110 Squadrons. As well as vivid and sometimes moving descriptions of actions, the tribulations of operating the all-wooden Mosquito are also covered.

Well illustrated with photographs of both the men and machines, these would have benefitted from being integrated alongside the relevant text. The book also contains a helpful (and sadly so long) list of Mosquito casualties in Burma as well as a useful glossary and notes on sources. This should appeal to both the researcher and general reader alike.

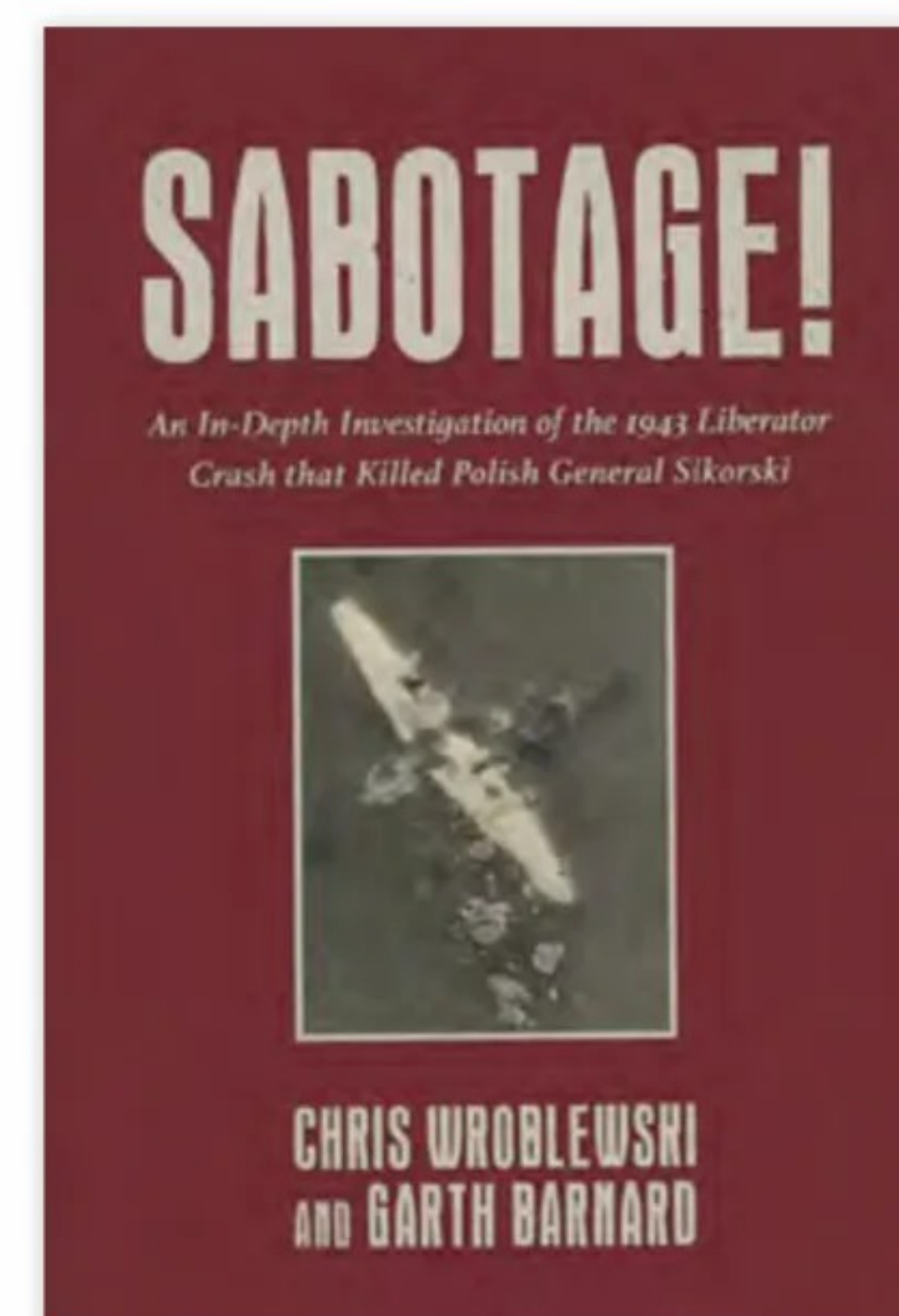
Jeremy Walsh, Hardback, Illustrated, 269pgs, £25, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk



Sabotage! An In-Depth Investigation of the 1943 Liberator Crash that Killed Polish General Sikorski

The crash of an RAF Liberator when taking off from Gibraltar in 1943 killed Gen Wladyslaw Sikorski, the Prime Minister of the Polish government in exile. Although investigated at the time, the incident has always been shrouded in controversy and the subject of conspiracy theories. In this book – produced to this publisher's usual high standards – the authors conduct a forensic examination of the available evidence, delving into the technical and the political. It is no light bedtime read as it is more akin to an accident investigation report – which, in reality, it is. The depth and level of the research is astonishing, though one has the feeling that the authors had already fixed their conclusion and thus produced a narrative to meet that. Certainly, it is one for the aficionado, but also is a fascinating presentation of some serious research. It is up to the reader to form their own view whether Sikorski's loss really was an accident... or an assassination.

Chris Wroblewski and Garth Barnard, Hardback, Illustrated, 255pgs, £25, www.grubstreet.co.uk





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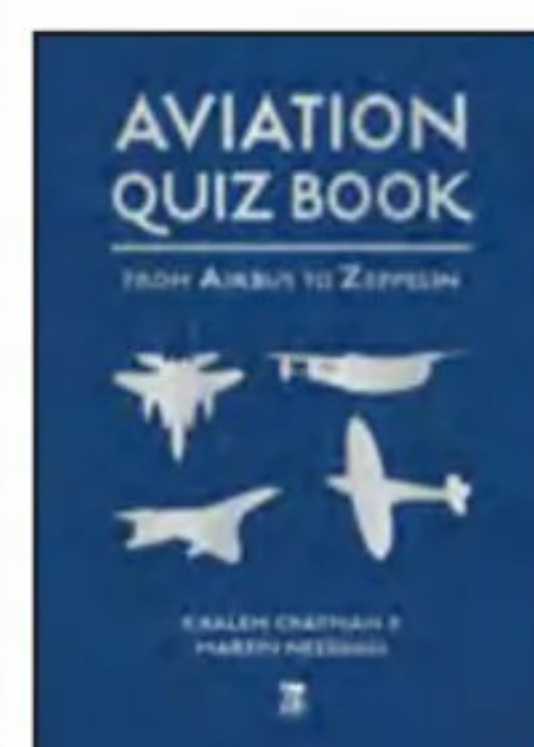
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LITTLEWORTH
MODELS

The Fundación Infante de Orleans holds a flying day on the first Sunday of each month – with the exception of January and August – at its Cuatro Vientos headquarters close to Madrid AirTeamImages.com/IsmaelJorda



February

- 1-25

Spies in the Skies: World War Two Aerial Reconnaissance exhibition
IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire
www.iwm.org.uk
- 17

Wattisham Station Heritage Museum Photoshoot
Wattisham Airfield, Suffolk
www.timelineevents.org
- 17

South Wales Aviation Museum Nightshoot
South Wales Aviation Museum, St Athan, Vale of Glamorgan
www.threshold.aero
- 18

6th Amsterdam Aviation Collectors Fair
van der Valk Hotel, Hoofddorp, the Netherlands
www.aviationfair.com
- 24-25

TAS Manchester Winter Aviation Memorabilia Fair
Runway Visitor Park, Manchester Airport
www.tasmanchester.com

March

- 3

Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day
Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain
www.fio.es

- 7

RAF Northolt Night Photoshoot
RAF Northolt, West London
www.northoltnightshoots.com
- 10

Sywell Aviation Museum Book and Model Sale
Sywell Aviation Museum, Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire
www.sywellaviationmuseum.org.uk
- 16

TCAHS Sywell Nightshoot
Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire
www.tcabs.org.uk
- 24

Heathrow Airport Enthusiasts Fair
Kempton Park Racecourse, Surrey
www.aircraftenthusiastfair.co.uk
- 24

Helicopter Museum Behind the Scenes Spotters Day
The Helicopter Museum, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset
www.helimumuseum.com
- 29-31

All Fools' Balloon Meet
The Black Horse, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire
www.bhbc.club
- 30

TCAHS Brighton Nightshoot
Brighton Airfield, North Yorkshire
www.tcabs.org.uk

- 30

Sywell Aviation Museum Open Day
Sywell Aviation Museum, Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire
www.sywellaviationmuseum.org.uk

April

- 5-6

Private Flyer Fest Ireland
Ballyboy Airfield, Dublin, Ireland
www.privateflyershow.com
- 7

Helicopter and Gyrocopter Fly-in
North Coates Airfield, Lincolnshire
www.northcoatesflyingclub.com
- 7

Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day
Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain
www.fio.es
- 17-20

AERO Friedrichshafen
Bodensee-Airport Friedrichshafen, Germany
www.aero-expo.de
- 20

Cornish Pasty Charity Fly-in and Fun Day
Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall
www.bodminairfield.com
- 20

Vintage Piper Aircraft Club Fly-in
Sleap Airfield, Shropshire
www.vintagepiper.co.uk

20	Pilot Careers Live
📍	Sofitel London Heathrow T5
🔗	www.pilotcareernews.com
20-21	Fête Aéropyrénées
📍	Perpignan Airport, Perpignan, France
🔗	www.aeropyrenees.com
21	Gatwick Aviation Fair
📍	K2 Centre, Crawley
🔗	www.threshold.aero
27	Vintage Aircraft Club Spring Fly-in
📍	Turweston Aerodrome, Buckinghamshire
🔗	www.vintageaircraftclub.org.uk
27	British Balloon Museum and Library Vintage Balloon Inflation Day
📍	Pidley, Huntingdon
🔗	www.bbml.org.uk
27-28	Den Ve Vzduchu (Plasy Air Day)
📍	Plasy Airport, Czech Republic
🔗	www.denvezduchu.cz

May

3-5	British Aerobatics - Icicle Trophy
📍	Sleap Airfield, Shropshire
🔗	www.aerobatics.org.uk
4	Boscombe Down Aviation Collection Aerojumble
📍	Boscombe Down Aviation Collection, Old Sarum
🔗	www.boscombedownaviationcollection.co.uk

4	Carrickmore Family Fun Weekend Fly-in
📍	C-More Flying School, Carrickmore Airfield, Northern Ireland
🔗	www.c-moreflyingschool.com
4-5	Microlight Trade Show
📍	Popham Airfield, Hampshire
🔗	www.popham-airfield.co.uk
5	VE Day Flying Day
📍	IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire
🔗	www.iwm.org.uk
5	Spring Fly-in
📍	Easter Airfield, Fearn, Ross-shire
🔗	www.easterairfield.co.uk
5	Twente Flying Club 60th Anniversary Fly-in
📍	Enschede Airport Twente, the Netherlands
🔗	www.vliegclubtwente.nl
5	Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day
📍	Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain
🔗	www.fio.es
10	Lancaster Night Photoshoot
📍	Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire
🔗	www.timelineevents.org
11	Airexpo
📍	Muret-Lherm Airfield, France
🔗	www.airexpo.org

11-12	Antwerp Stampe Fly-in
📍	Antwerp International Airport, Belgium
🔗	www.stampeclub.com
12	Shuttleworth Best of British Airshow
📍	Old Warden, Bedfordshire
🔗	www.shuttleworth.org
12	Lancashire Aero Club Spring Fly-in
📍	Kenyon Hall Airfield, Warrington, Cheshire
🔗	www.lancsaeroclub.co.uk
12	LSZP Fly-in 2024
📍	Biel-Kappelen Airfield, Switzerland
🔗	www.lszp.ch
15-22	Grunau Baby Meet
📍	Strausberger Airfield, Berlin, Germany
🔗	www.fliegerclub-strausberg.de
16-19	Grumman Owners and Pilots Association Europe Fly-in
📍	Oban and the Isles Airport, Argyll and Bute
🔗	www.aya.org
17-18	Private Flyer Fest South
📍	Wycombe Air Park, Buckinghamshire
🔗	www.privateflyershow.com
17-19	Chipfest
📍	Leicester Airport, Leicester
🔗	www.dhc1chipmunkclub.co.uk





The Shuttleworth Collection's Race Day airshow will likely mark the 90th anniversary of the 1934 MacRobertson Air race, which was won by de Havilland DH.88 Comet, G-ACSS (c/n 1996), *Grosvenor House* George Aldrich/vimages

<div>18</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Abingdon Air and Country Show Dalton Barracks, Oxfordshire www.abingdonairandcountry.co.uk</div>	<div>25-26</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Shuttleworth D-Day Weekend Old Warden, Bedfordshire www.shuttleworth.org</div>	<div>26</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Kirkbride Airfield Open Day and Fly-in Kirkbride Airfield, Cumbria www.kirkbrideairfield.weebly.com</div>
<div>18</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>British Aerobatics - Fenland and McLean Trophies Fenland Airfield, Lincolnshire www.aerobatics.org.uk</div>	<div>25-26</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Gap-Tallard Air Show Gap-Tallard Airport, France www.meeting-aerien-gap-tallard.com</div>	<div>28-30</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>EBACE 2024 Geneva Airport, Switzerland www.ebace.aero</div>
<div>18-19</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Vintage Aircraft Club Fly-in Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall www.bodminairfield.com</div>	<div>25-26</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Arbon Classics 2024 Arbon, Lake Constance, Switzerland www.arbon-classics.ch</div>	<div>30-Jun 2</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Kehler Flight Days Kehl Sundheim Airfield, Kehl, Germany www.kehler-flugtage.de</div>
<div>18-19</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Le Temps des Helices La Ferte Alais, France www.letempsdeshelices.fr</div>	<div>25-31</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Vintage Glider Club National Rally South Wales Gliding Club, Monmouthshire www.uskgc.co.uk</div>	<div>31-Jun 2</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>D-Day 80 North Weald Embarkation North Weald Airfield, Essex www.dday-80.co.uk</div>
<div>25</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Vintage Festival and Hangar Dance Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire www.lincsaviation.co.uk</div>	<div>25-Jun 2</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>18M Standard Class Nationals/20M Multi-seat Class Nationals Lasham Gliding Society www.gliding.co.uk</div>	<div>31-Jun 2</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Midlands Air Festival Ragley Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire www.midlandsairfestival.com</div>
<div>25</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Vintage Piper Aircraft Club Fly-in Perth Airport, Perthshire www.vintagepiper.co.uk</div>	<div>26</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Light Aircraft Association Wessex Strut Fly-in Henstridge Airfield, Somerset www.henstridgeairfield.com</div>	<div>31-Jun 2</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>52nd Mull Annual Fly-in Glenforsa Airfield, Isle of Mull www.glenforsa.com</div>
<div>25</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Marne-Grand Est International Air Show Paris-Vatry Airport, Vatry, France www.airshowdisplay.fr</div>	<div>26</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Wings and Wheels 2024 Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, Essex www.stowmaries.org.uk</div>	<div>June</div>
<div>25</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Fly-in Cinema Texel International Airport, the Netherlands www.texelairport.nl</div>		<div>1</div> <div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div> <div>Harborough Summer Fest (incl. air displays) Market Harborough Showground, Leicestershire www.explosiveevents.com</div>

2024 UK & EUROPE AVIATION EVENTS GUIDE

1	British Aerobatics - McAully, Newbold and Don Henry trophies Compton Abbas Airfield, Dorset www.aerobatics.org.uk	6-8	France Air Expo Lyon-Bron Airport, France www.franceairexpo.com	8-9	Vintage Aircraft Club 60th Birthday Northern Celebration Brighton Airfield, North Yorkshire www.vintageaircraftclub.org.uk
1-2	Duxford Summer Air Show - D-Day 80 IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire www.iwm.org.uk	6-8	L-Birds Back to Normandy St André de l'Eure Aerodrome, France www.l-birds.fr	8-9	de Havilland Weekend Old Warden, Bedfordshire www.shuttleworth.org
1-2	English Riviera Seafront Airshow Paignton Seafront, Devon www.englishriviera.co.uk	7-9	50th Guernsey Air Rally Guernsey Airport, Guernsey www.guernseyaeroclub.com	9	RAF Cosford Air Show RAF Cosford, Shropshire www.cosfordairshow.co.uk
1-2	Shuttleworth Military Weekend Old Warden, Bedfordshire www.shuttleworth.org	7-9	Fun Fly-in EHMZ Midden-Zeeland Airport, Middelburg, the Netherlands www.funflyin.nl	9	Danish Air Show Aalborg, Denmark www.danishairshow.dk
2	Kjeller Flydag Air Show Kjeller Airport, Norway www.flydagen.no	7-9	Klassikwelt Bodensee Messe Friedrichshafen, Germany www.klassikwelt-bodensee.de	9	Festival Aereo de Motril Motril, Spain www.motrilairshow.com
2	Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain www.fio.es	8	Vintage Piper Aircraft Club 40th Anniversary Fly-in Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire www.vintagepiper.co.uk	10	de Havilland Mosquito Photo Day Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire www.lincsaviation.co.uk
5	D-Day 80 'Easy Company' Embarkation Camp Uppottery Airfield, Devon www.dday-80.co.uk	8	Summer Fly-in Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, Essex www.stowmaries.org.uk	13	Battle of Britain Seafront Airshow Guernsey Seafront www.guernseyairdisplay.com
5-9	ILA Berlin Berlin ExpoCenter Airport, Germany www.ila-berlin.de	8	Höga Kusten Airport Airshow Höga Kusten Airport, Sweden www.hogakustenairport.se	13-15	AeroExpo UK Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire www.aeroexpo.co.uk
6	Vintage Aircraft Club Fly-in Popham Airfield, Hampshire www.popham-airfield.co.uk	8-9	Estonian Aviation Days Tartu Airport, Estonia www.lennundusmuuseum.ee	14-16	British Aerobatics - Duxford and Nathaniel Alony trophies Leicester Airport, Leicester www.aerobatics.org.uk

Blackbushe Airfield's annual Open Day and Fly-in is set to be held on June 15 Steve Lynes





Several airshows are to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the F-16's first flight. This year is also significant for the type as the Royal Netherlands Air Force retires its examples *George Aldrich/vlimages*

- 14-16

Weston Park Airshow International
Weston Park, Shifnal, Shropshire
www.airshowinternational.co.uk
- 15

Grasshopper Gathering
Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall
www.bodminairfield.com
- 15

Helicopter Fly-in
Sleap Airfield, Shropshire
www.shropshireaeroclub.com
- 15

Blackbushe Open Day and Fly-in
Blackbushe Airport, Hampshire
www.blackbusheairday.com
- 15

Classic Wheels and Wings Show
Gilze Rijen Air Base, the Netherlands
www.classicwings-wheels.nl
- 15-16

Stampe Club International Fly-in
Headcorn Aerodrome, Kent
www.stampeclub.com
- 15-16

Sola Airshow
Stavanger Sola Airport, Norway
www.solaairshow.no
- 15-16

Vaasa International Airshow
Vaasa Airport, Finland
www.vaasaairshow.fi
- 15-16

Baltic International Airshow
Liepaja International Airport, Latvia
www.balticairshow.com

- 15-23

Standard Class Nationals/15M Class Nationals/Open Class Nationals
Cotswold Gliding Club, Aston Down, Gloucestershire
www.gliding.co.uk
- 21

The Longest Day Fly-in
Texel International Airport, the Netherlands
www.texelairport.nl
- 21-22

Antidotum Airshow
Leszno, Poland
www.antidotum.letniskoleszno.pl

- 21-22

Worcester Balloon Festival
Worcester Racecourse, Worcestershire
www.worcesterhotairballoonfestival.co.uk
- 21-23

Draycot Fly-in
Draycot Aerodrome, Wiltshire
www.draycotaerodrome.com
- 21-28

Camphill Vintage Rally
Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club, Great Hucklow, Derbyshire
www.glidingclub.org.uk



▲ Egmond Vintage Wings' Fokker D.XXI reproduction is set to make its UK flying display debut this year, having been confirmed for June's Sywell 2024 air show *Leonard van den Broek*



The Vintage Aerobatic World Championships are to be held at Hans Christian Andersen Airport in Odense, Denmark from August 22-25

Martin Needham

22	Devon Strut Fly-in Farway Common Airfield, Devon www.farwaycommon.com	23	Meaux Airshow Meaux-Esbly Aerodrome, France www.meaux-airshow.fr	28-30	St Yan Classic Fly-in and Epsilon Meet Saint-Yan Airport, France www.flyinfbk.cybartis.com
22-23	Sywell 2024 Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire www.sywell2024.co.uk	28-30	Shuttleworth International Fly-in, Evening Airshow and Festival of Flight Airshow Old Warden, Bedfordshire www.shuttleworth.org	29-30	Heveningham Hall Country Fair Heveningham Hall, Suffolk www.countryfair.co.uk
22-23	Summer Fly-in Easter Airfield, Fearn, Ross-shire www.easterairfield.co.uk	28-30	North East Lincolnshire Armed Forces Day Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire www.armedforcesnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk	29-30	Pithiviers Fly-in Pithiviers Airfield, Loiret, France www.ac-ptv.org
22-30	Bidford Regionals Bidford Gliding and Flying Club, Bidford-on-Avon, Worcestershire www.gliding.co.uk			29-30	Dolkosh Fly-in Dolmar Airfield, Germany www.flugschule-dolmar.de



▲ Peter Teichman – owner of this Spitfire IX, a Spitfire XI and a P-51D Mustang – is a supporter of events big and small across the UK, including those at Leicester Airport where he took to the air on his first flying lesson

Martin Needham

July	
1-11	CISM World Military Parachute Championships Szolnok-Szandai Airfield, Hungary www.milsport.one
3	Belgian Air Component Open Day Koksijde Air Base, Belgium www.mil.be
5-6	Private Flyer & Elite Lifestyle Showcase Leeds East Airport, Church Fenton, North Yorkshire www.eliteevents.com

5-6  	RSA Euro Fly-in Brienne le Château Airfield, France www.euroflyin.rsafrance.com	6-7  	Wales National Airshow Swansea Bay, Wales www.walesnationalairshow.com	10-14  	British Aerobatic Open and National Championships Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire www.aerobatics.org.uk
5-7  	Teignmouth Airshow Teignmouth Seafront, Devon www.teignmouthairshow.co.uk	6-7  	Moorsele Fly-in and Open Day Moorsele Airfield, Belgium www.flyinmoorsele.be	12  	Saltby Open Aerobatics Championship Saltby Airfield, Grantham, Lincolnshire www.aerobatics.org.uk
6  	Vintage Piper Aircraft Club Fly-in Northrepps Aerodrome, Norfolk www.vintagepiper.co.uk	6-7  	Black Mountain Fly-in and Open Day Genk-Zwartberg Airfield, Belgium www.ebzw.be	12-14  	Sleapkosh Fly-in and Evening Airshow Sleap Airfield, Shropshire www.shropshireaeroclub.com
6  	Battle Proms Concert Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire www.battleproms.com	6-7  	Stearman and Friends Fly-in Bienenfarm Airfield, Germany www.quax-flieger.de	12-14  	Finnish Amateur-built Fly-in Kuhmo Airfield, Finland www.kuik.fi
6  	Capel Military Show Aldhurst Farm, Capel, Surrey www.capelmilitaryshow.com	6-14  	Shenington Regionals Edge Hill Gliding Club, Shenington Airfield, Oxfordshire www.gliding.co.uk	13  	Wallop Wings and Wheels AAC Middle Wallop, Hampshire www.armyflying.com
6  	Victors Team 20th Anniversary Fly-in and Airshow Ursel Airfield, Belgium www.thevictors.be	6-14  	Vintage and Retro Gliding Week Alleberg, Sweden www.vintagegliderclub.org	13  	Summer Fly-in and Barbecue Brighton Airfield, North Yorkshire www.realaero.com
6  	SAR Katwijk Katwijk, the Netherlands www.sarkatwijk.nl	7  	Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain www.fio.es	13  	Battle Proms Concert Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire www.battleproms.com
6  	OldtimAIR Stanserhorn, Stans, Switzerland www.stanserhorn.ch				



The forthcoming airshow season is likely to involve plenty of Dakotas as part of D-Day 80th anniversary commemorations
Dirk Grothe/Vimages

13	Pilot Careers Live North Runway Visitor Park, Manchester Airport www.pilotcareersnews.com	20	Auster, Beagle and Bulldog Fly-in Leicester Airport, Leicester www.austerclub.org	27-28	Bristell and Sport Cruiser Fly-in Popham Airfield, Hampshire www.popham-airfield.co.uk
13-14	Southport Air Show Southport Seafront, Merseyside www.visitsouthport.com	20	Summer Evening Air Show Old Warden, Bedfordshire www.shuttleworth.org	27-28	TAS Summer Aviation Memorabilia Fair Runway Visitor Park, Manchester Airport www.tasmanchester.com
13-14	Microlight and Flexwing Fly-in Rufforth Airfield East, North Yorkshire www.rufforthairfieldeast.co.uk	20	Trainers Fly-in Aviodrome Museum, Lelystad, the Netherlands www.aviodrome.nl	27-28	Old Buckenham Airshow Old Buckenham Airfield, Norfolk www.oldbuckenhamairshow.com
14	Scale Model Show The Helicopter Museum, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset www.helimuseum.com	20-28	Dunstable Regionals London Gliding Club, Dunstable, Bedfordshire www.gliding.co.uk	27-Aug 3	FAI World Microlight Championships Deenethorpe Airfield, Northamptonshire www.wmc2024.com
19-20	Doncaster Hot Air Balloon Festival Town Field, Doncaster, South Yorkshire www.visitdoncaster.com	22-26	Farnborough International Air Show Farnborough Airport, Hampshire www.farnboroughairshow.com	27-Aug 4	The Husbands Bosworth Challenge Cup The Gliding Centre, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire www.gliding.co.uk
19-21	Royal International Air Tattoo RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire www.airtattoo.com	26	The Americans Flying Day IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire www.iwm.org.uk	28-Aug 12	Vintage Glider Rally 2024 Pociunai, Lithuania www.vintagegliderclub.org
20	Ladies' Day Fly-in Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall www.bodminairfield.com	26-Aug 4	Italian International Balloon Grand Prix Foligno Airport, Italy www.sagrantinocup.it	August	
20	Battle Proms Concert Hatfield Park, Hertfordshire www.battleproms.com	27	Operational Activities Fly-in Aviodrome Museum, Lelystad, the Netherlands www.aviodrome.nl	2-3	Legends of the Sky Air Show Hradec Kralove Airfield, Czech Republic www.legendynebes.cz



The Royal Canadian Air Force's 100th anniversary is to be celebrated at the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in July. Appropriately, the first aircraft to be confirmed for the event was the RCAF's McDonnell Douglas CF-18 Hornet display team
AirteamImages.com/Matthieu Douhaire



Airbus, Boeing and Embraer will showcase their latest commercial aviation offerings at Farnborough in July

<div><div>3</div><div>Battle Proms Concert</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Highclere Castle, Hampshire</div><div>www.battleproms.com</div></div></div>	<div><div>8-11</div><div>Bristol International Balloon Fiesta</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Ashton Court, Bristol</div><div>www.bristolballoonfiesta.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>15-18</div><div>Airbourne - Eastbourne International Airshow</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Eastbourne Seafront, East Sussex</div><div>www.visiteastbourne.com</div></div></div>
<div><div>3</div><div>LAA Devon Strut Fly-in</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Dunkeswell Airfield, Devon</div><div>www.dunkeswell.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>9</div><div>de Havilland Moth Club Gathering of Moths</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Turweston Aerodrome, Buckinghamshire</div><div>www.dhmothclub.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>16-18</div><div>Bolkow and Friends Fly-in</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Koblenz Winnigen Airfield, Germany</div><div>www.mbb-flugzeuge.de</div></div></div>
<div><div>3</div><div>East Kirkby Air Show</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire</div><div>www.lincsaviation.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>9-11</div><div>Retro Festival</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Newbury Showground, Berkshire</div><div>www.retrofestival.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>17</div><div>Duxford Flying Evening</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire</div><div>www.iwm.org.uk</div></div></div>
<div><div>3</div><div>British Aerobatics - Golding Barrett, Roy Legg and Cavendish trophies</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Brighton Airfield, North Yorkshire</div><div>www.aerobatics.org.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>10</div><div>Eisenhower Day</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Leicester Airport, Leicester</div><div>www.leicesterairport.com</div></div></div>	<div><div>17</div><div>Vintage Aircraft Club 60th Birthday Southern Celebration</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Old Warden, Bedfordshire</div><div>www.vintageaircraftclub.org.uk</div></div></div>
<div><div>3-10</div><div>FAI World Paramotor Endurance Championships</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Manston Airport, Kent</div><div>www.ppgcomps.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>10</div><div>Vintage Piper Aircraft Club Fly-in</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Oaksey Park Airfield, Gloucestershire</div><div>www.vintagepiper.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>17-18</div><div>British Aerobatics - Gunpowder Trophy</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Leicester Airport, Leicester</div><div>www.aerobatics.org.uk</div></div></div>
<div><div>3-11</div><div>Club Class Nationals</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Bristol and Gloucestershire Gliding Club, Gloucestershire</div><div>www.gliding.co.uk</div></div></div>	<div><div>10</div><div>Operational Activities Fly-in</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Aviodrome Museum, Lelystad, the Netherlands</div><div>www.aviodrome.nl</div></div></div>	<div><div>17-18</div><div>Dittinger Flugtage</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Dittingen, Switzerland</div><div>www.flugtage.ch</div></div></div>
<div><div>4</div><div>Lundy Sunday Fly-in</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Lundy Island, Devon</div><div>www.bodminairfield.com</div></div></div>	<div><div>10-11</div><div>Shuttleworth Family Weekend (air display 11th only)</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Old Warden, Bedfordshire</div><div>www.shuttleworth.org</div></div></div>	<div><div>17-18</div><div>Old Timer Fly/Drive-in</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Schaffen-Diest Airfield, Belgium</div><div>www.flyin.dac.be</div></div></div>
<div><div>4</div><div>Mainfonds Air Show</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Mainfonds-Aubeville Country House, Mainfonds, France</div><div>www.mainfonds.com</div></div></div>	<div><div>10-11</div><div>Blackpool Airshow</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Blackpool Seafront, Fylde Coast</div><div>www.visitblackpool.com</div></div></div>	<div><div>17-19</div><div>Whitby Regatta</div><div><div><div></div></div><div>Whitby Seafront, North Yorkshire</div><div>www.whitbyregatta.co.uk</div></div></div>

Pilot owner groups, such as the Vintage Aircraft Club, de Havilland Moth Club, Vintage Piper Aircraft Club and the International Auster Club, organise events and gatherings across the UK between April and October each year Martin Needham



17-23	Cromer Carnival (incl. seafront airshow)	22-23	Clacton Airshow	24	Wings and Wheels Henstridge
	Cromer Seafront, Norfolk		Clacton-on-Sea, Essex		Henstridge Airfield, Somerset
	www.cromercarnival.co.uk		www.clactonairshow.com		www.wingsandwheels-henstridge.com
18	Propwash Festival of the Air	22-25	Vintage Aerobatic World Championships	24	G-George Day
	Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, Essex		Hans Christian Andersen Airport, Odense, Denmark		Brighton Airfield, North Yorkshire
	www.stowmaries.org.uk		www.vintageaerobatic.com		www.realaero.com
19	USAAF Photography Day	23-25	Strathaven Balloon Festival	24	Cornish Pasty Fly-in
	Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire		Strathaven Park, Strathaven, South Lanarkshire		Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall
	www.lincsaviation.co.uk		www.strathavenballoonfestival.co.uk		www.bodminairfield.com
				24	Somme International Air Meeting
					Amiens-Henri Potez Airport, Albert, France
					www.airshowdisplay.fr
				24	Rasso Colibri 2024
					Argentan Aerodrome, Argentan, France
					www.rasso-colibri-2023.e-monsite.com
				24	Wings over Holland Fly-in
					Texel International Airport, the Netherlands
					www.texelairport.nl
				25	Little Gransden Air and Car Show
					Little Gransden Airfield, Bedfordshire
					www.littlegransdenairshow.co.uk
				26	Warbirds of World War Two
					Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire
					www.lincsaviation.co.uk



▲ Cranfield University's Saab 340 – now the only example flying in the UK – is likely to make an appearance at the Royal International Air Tattoo as part of its 'Pushing the Boundaries in Air and Space' theme, which celebrates 100 years of British military test flying Martin Needham

29-Sep 1	Bournemouth Air Festival
📍	Bournemouth Seafront, Dorset
➡	www.bournemouthair.co.uk
30-31	CANCELLED: AirSpirit 24
📍	Emmen Air Base, Switzerland
➡	www.airspirit24.ch
30-31	Bucharest International Air Show
📍	Bucharest Aurel Vlaicu Airport, Romania
➡	www.bias.aero
30-Sep 1	Light Aircraft Association Rally
📍	Leicester Airport, Leicester
➡	www.lightaircraftassociation.co.uk
31	19 Squadron Flying Day
📍	IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire
➡	www.iwm.org.uk
31-Sep 1	Slovak International Air Fest
📍	Malacky Air Base, Slovakia
➡	www.siaf.sk
31-Sep 1	Shuttleworth Proms Weekend (air display 31st only)
📍	Old Warden, Bedfordshire
➡	www.shuttleworth.org
31-Sep 1	Summer Flying Meeting
📍	North Coates Airfield, Lincolnshire
➡	www.northcoatesflyingclub.com

September	
1	Aviodrome Museum Flying Day
📍	Aviodrome Museum, Lelystad, the Netherlands
➡	www.aviodrome.nl
1	Telemark Airshow
📍	Notodden Airport, Norway
➡	www.telemarkairshow.no
1	Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day
📍	Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain
➡	www.fio.es
6-7	The International Ayr Show
📍	Ayr Low Green, Ayr, South Ayrshire
➡	www.destinationsouthayrshire.co.uk
6-7	AIRPOWER 24
📍	Zeltweg, Austria
➡	www.airpower24.at
6-8	Goodwood Revival
📍	Goodwood Aerodrome, West Sussex
➡	www.goodwood.com
7	Cornwall Strut Fly-in
📍	Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall
➡	www.bodminairfield.com

7-8	Electrifly-in
📍	Bern Airport, Switzerland
➡	www.electrifly-in.ch
12	Jersey International Air Display
📍	St Helier, Jersey
➡	www.jerseyairdisplay.org.uk
13-15	Mondial de l'ULM International Microlight Exhibition
📍	Blois-Le Breuil Aerodrome, France
➡	Mondialulm.fr
14-15	Duxford Battle of Britain Air Show
📍	IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire
➡	www.iwm.org.uk
14-15	Air Legend
📍	Melun-Villaroche Aerodrome, France
➡	www.airlegend.fr
14-15	Athens Flying Week
📍	Tanagra Air Base, Greece
➡	www.athensflyingweek.gr
15	Vintage Piper Aircraft Club Fly-in
📍	Leicester Airport, Leicester
➡	www.vintagepiper.co.uk
21-22	Sywell Classic Pistons and Props
📍	Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire
➡	www.sywellclassic.co.uk



Austria's largest air show – Airpower, held at Zeltweg Air Base – is well supported by both the Austrian Air Force and the Salzburg-based Flying Bulls Red Bull

2024 UK & EUROPE AVIATION EVENTS GUIDE

- 21-22

British Aerobatics - Tiger Trophy

Leicester Airport, Leicester

www.aerobatics.org.uk
- 21-22

International Sanicole Airshow 2024

Sanicole, Belgium

www.sanicole.com
- 21-22

NATO Days

Ostrava Airport, Ostrava, Czech Republic

www.natodays.cz
- 24-25

Helitech Expo

Excel London

www.helitech.co.uk
- 28

Bomber County Photography Evening

Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire

www.lincsaviation.co.uk

October

- 3-6

Volare Airshow

Reggio Emilia Airport, Italy

www.volareairshow.com
- 5

Duxford Flying Finale

IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire

www.iwm.org.uk

- 6

Shuttleworth Race Day Air Show

Old Warden, Bedfordshire

www.shuttleworth.org.uk
- 6

Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day

Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain

www.fio.es
- 9-12

Portugal Air Summit 2024

Ponte de Sor Aerodrome, Portugal

www.portugalairsummit.pt
- 12

Autumn Fly-in

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, Essex

www.stowmaries.org.uk
- 20

Midland Air Museum Aviation Fair

Midland Air Museum, Coventry, Warwickshire

www.aircraftenthusiastfair.co.uk

November

- 2

Fireworks Display

Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, Lincolnshire

www.lincsaviation.co.uk

- 3

Fundación Infante de Orleans Flying Day

Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Madrid, Spain

www.fio.es
- 9

Avro Vulcan Night Photoshoot

Wellesbourne Mountford Airfield, Warwickshire

www.timelineevents.org
- 10

Remembrance Sunday

Brighton Airfield, North Yorkshire

www.realaero.com
- 10

Remembrance Sunday

IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire

www.iwm.org.uk
- 10

Remembrance Parade

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, Essex

www.stowmaries.org.uk
- 17

Heathrow Airport Enthusiasts Fair

Kempton Park Racecourse, Surrey

www.aircraftenthusiastfair.co.uk

These listings are subject to change. Please ensure an event is taking place prior to setting off. Aviation News is not responsible for any changes or cancellations to the events listed here.



Germany's aerospace industry will be on display at June's ILA Berlin trade show ILA Berlin





AVIATION^{NEWS}

A Royal Netherlands Air Force C-130 Hercules heads a formation including two F-16AMs and two F-35A Lightning IIs Joe Campion



KONINKLIJKE LUCHTMACHT
ROYAL NETHERLANDS AIR FORCE

Joop Mulder

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Even now the stories chill the blood and raise the heart rate – the bravery of aircrews who flew the Fairey Swordfish into the most hazardous of wartime hostilities is rightly the stuff of legend. Thankfully, the charismatic biplane lives on in the very capable hands of Navy Wings. Following a fascinating visit to the team's Yeovilton base, we're proud to feature Swordfish W5856 on our cover and to tell the incredible story of both this machine and others like it.

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Not unlike the Swordfish, crews that manned the Halifax endured some of the most dangerous and costly raids of World War Two. With exclusive artwork and rarely seen images, we recount the infamous

Nuremberg raid and profile the legendary 'Friday the 13th'.

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KEY
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Cuban classics

Richard Vandervord shares a selection of classic commercial airliners from a 1995 trip to Cuba

 AOM French Airlines leased several McDonnell Douglas DC-10s to Cubana during the 1990s and early 2000s so as to enable the Cuban airline to operate transatlantic services using western aircraft while circumventing US embargoes so they could continue to be supported by the relevant design authorities. This 1979-built example, F-GTDG (c/n 46997), was acquired from Air Afrique in 1995 and immediately placed with Cubana, later operating for Garuda Indonesia before being scrapped in 2001



 Cubana operated 11 Yakovlev Yak-40s, including CU-T1204 (c/n 9641650). Built in 1976, the aircraft was delivered to the Cuban carrier by sea, arriving at Santiago de Cuba docks in early November that year and reassembled shortly thereafter. It is understood to have been retired in the early 2000s and then scrapped


 Ilyushin Il-62M, CU-T1209 (c/n 1828132), was delivered to Cubana from Ilyushin's Kazan factory on January 18, 1978. It would serve with the Cuban flag carrier for almost two decades before being withdrawn from service in 1996 and scrapped






 This Yakovlev Yak-40, CU-T1221 (c/n 9841159), was delivered by sea to Cubana in 1979 and spent 11 years with the carrier before being transferred to Aerocaribbean in 1990. It would continue to fly for several more years before being withdrawn at Havana in 1997



 This Tupolev Tu-154B, CU-T1256 (c/n 84A599), was the penultimate example to be delivered to Cubana, arriving on June 7, 1984. It spent 15 years flying for the airline before being withdrawn from service by March 2000

 Five Tupolev Tu-154Bs, including CU-T1256 (c/n 84A599), flew for Cubana from 1980. One example, CU-T1227, was written off following a hard landing at Mexico City on September 14, 1991 while the remaining four trijets were phased out prematurely due to a lack of liquidity at the end of the decade




 The first Yakovlev Yak-42D for Cubana, CU-T1227 (c/n 4520423016238), made technical stops at Moscow/Sheremetyevo, Berlin/Schoenefeld and Shannon, Ireland on its delivery flight from Saratov in September 1990. It was withdrawn from use within a decade of its arrival in the Caribbean and scrapped shortly thereafter



 This Fokker F27-400, CU-T1286 (c/n 10332), spent much of its working life in Spain, having initially been delivered to Iberia on September 29, 1967 as EC-BMS. It later moved to fellow Spanish operators Transeuropa Compañía de Aviación and Aviaco before making its way to Cuba in 1994. It was last noted having been scrapped on March 3, 2003

 In all, Cubana acquired eight Fokker F27 Friendships from Aviaco in 1994. This example, CU-T1292 (c/n 10421), would be one of the first to be phased out, being stored as early as November 1996. It had previously flown with the Spanish carrier as EC-DBM



 Aerogaviota was formed by the Cuban Army and had started operations less than a year before the author's visit to Cuba. This Yakovlev Yak-40, CU-T1449 (c/n 9021260), had previously flown with the Cuban Air Force and Cubana before joining the start-up in 1995. It would spend seven years with the carrier, being sold to Aerocaribbean in 2002. After 31 years of service in and around the Marxist-Leninist socialist republic, it was retired to Santiago de Cuba in 2011 and has since found gainful employment as a restaurant in the city

 This Antonov An-24V, CU-T881 (c/n 67302601), was delivered new to Cuba in 1966 and was in the twilight of its flying career when it passed the author's lens at Havana in 1995. By 1997, it was noted in poor condition at the hub.



Dreamliners broaden flydubai's horizon



On June 1, it will be 15 years since flydubai launched commercial services from Dubai to Beirut, 15 months after the airline was established in March 2008. While the airline's network has grown to more than 120 destinations and its fleet to 84 aircraft, there has been a constant factor: the Boeing 737.

For almost the airline's entire history, the 737-800 formed the backbone of its fleet, reaching 62 examples at its peak, before flydubai introduced the MAX. As of January 1, 2024, the carrier operated 29 737-800s, 52 MAX 8s and three MAX 9s, with another 136 MAXs on order. To cater for capacity shortfalls, the carrier is wet-leasing four 737-800s from Smartwings from October 2023 through mid-April 2024.

But all that will change in 2026 when flydubai will take delivery of its first of 30 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners, an



Flydubai surprised many people by ordering 30 Boeing 787 widebodies at the Dubai Airshow in November 2023. It marks a new chapter for the airline, as **Richard Schuurman** discovers

▲ Flydubai's 30-strong order for Boeing 787-9s is arguably a greater statement of the airline's intent than its 2017 order for 225 737 MAXs
All images flydubai via author

◀ Flydubai chairman Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum and Boeing's Stan Deal put pen to paper on the \$11bn Dreamliner acquisition

► Flydubai currently boasts an all-Boeing single-aisle fleet of 52 737 MAX 8s, 29 737-800s and a trio of MAX 9s, while 131 MAX 8s remain on order [AirTeamImages.com/](https://www.airteamimages.com/) Loredana Cioclei

order representing \$11 billion at list prices. "It signals a new chapter for the airline, building on the success of a strong business model," said Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, chairman of flydubai and Emirates, on November 13 to a packed press room at the Dubai Airshow. "This is flydubai's first widebody order, diversifying its fleet of all Boeing 737 aircraft. It has always been flydubai's strategy to invest in the most advanced and efficient aircraft."

Not standing still

Speaking to *Aviation News* a day later, flydubai CEO Ghaith Al Ghaith explained the reasoning behind the addition of widebodies: "By the time we receive our first 787, we will be almost 18 years old. We will be coming of age. Our Highness Sheikh Mohammed [the ruler of Dubai] always tells us that if you stand still, people will pass you. This is exactly what we are doing at flydubai. We are not standing still. We want to grow, we want to expand. We are honoured by the trust placed in us by the Royal Highnesses and Sheikh Ahmed to expand."

"We are very confident that there is scope for growth in the whole region and, most importantly, in the United Arab Emirates and Dubai. If you look at the composition of the travel industry 20 years ago, it has changed. We live in a place that is so blessed and diversified that the business has changed. The demographic is growing. All that gives us the confidence that the future will require us to expand, grow and diversify."

Range restrictions

Operating out of Terminals 2 and 3 at Dubai International Airport, flydubai's network of 122 destinations in 54 countries extends from Pattaya in Thailand in the east to Italy's Milan Bergamo in the west, and from Dar Es Salaam as its most southern destination to St Petersburg its most northerly. The carrier has built a strong presence in Russia and former CIS states and continues to operate to most Russian destinations as the UAE doesn't support international sanctions. Last summer, the airline carried 4.5 million passengers, up 30% year-on-year.

Since launching a partnership with Emirates in November 2017, flydubai has grown its role from simply



► Flydubai plans to begin operating 737 MAX 8s fitted with business suites, including Safran seats that can be transformed into a 75-inch flatbed and equipped with sliding doors for privacy



being a feeder airline for its bigger sibling in Dubai. The two airlines connect to more than 200 destinations. When travel demand was down during the coronavirus pandemic, flydubai was able to offer narrowbody feeder capacity to Emirates. With the start of the codeshare between Emirates and United Airlines in March 2023 and another with Air Canada in May, flydubai is expected to benefit from additional traffic from North America. Flydubai's network is range-limited by where the MAX 8 can go, which is a maximum of 3,550nm from the airline's hub. Adding the 787-9 with its 7,565nm range opens up a whole new world.

"Flydubai remains focused on connecting previously underserved markets to and from Dubai. The Boeing 787 Dreamliner will expand the horizon for the carrier, while adding more capacity on the existing routes," Sheikh Ahmed said during the press conference. Over

the years, the carrier has launched services on 75 routes that were not served from Dubai.

Ghaith Al Ghaith was unwilling to share where flydubai will operate the 787s, but said: "For sure, we would go to further places and bigger markets. But we will also use it to grow our current network. It broadens the horizon for the company. It is almost like we are born anew. We are very excited to take on that challenge."

The CEO pointed out that the 787 order is a new one, denying media reports that flydubai is inheriting production slots from Emirates, which announced at the Dubai Airshow that it had swapped 30 787-9s for the smaller -8 and -10: "I think their delivery slots started in 2023. That is not how Boeing manages slots. This is a deal purely worked out for flydubai and our own plans and challenges."

Flydubai could still add the MAX 10 to the fleet, but no decision has been made, admitted Ghaith Al Ghaith: "The -10 we could still have. We have options. But when you compare the -10 to what the 787 can do, it is a different ball game. For us, the 787-9 is the right aircraft. With its efficiency, it is an extremely good aircraft. We could have chosen the 787-8 and then moved on to the -9, but the -9 was always our best option."

A choice between Rolls-Royce Trent 1000 and General Electric GEnx-1B engines will be made later: "We are looking at both. We will take what we think is the best for us. With GE, we have had a good relationship through CFM for a long time, but Rolls-Royce has a very good name in this part of the world."

▼ The Dubai-based carrier has yet to disclose where it plans to operate its Boeing 787-9s, but CEO Ghaith Al Ghaith has stated that the aircraft will be used to strengthen its current network as well as serve new destinations





New MRO facility

By the time the Dreamliners arrive in 2026, flydubai hopes to have completed a new maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility at Dubai World Central (DWC). The \$190m site will conduct C-checks and other heavy maintenance, while base maintenance is to stay at DXB. It is the same for Emirates, which during the airshow announced a \$950 million investment in a new MRO complex for heavy maintenance at DWC.

A year from now, flydubai will open a new \$56m pilot training centre, set to house six CAE simulators for the 737 and MAX fleet, with space for two more narrowbody or widebody simulators. The airline will likely acquire its own 787 simulators to be less

dependent on third-party training. The new facility at the flydubai Campus will also train cabin crew.

With all these upcoming investments, flydubai has a lot on its plate for the next couple of years. But this doesn't mean 2024 will be quiet. The carrier will start rolling out new business suites on factory-delivered MAX 8s this year, as unveiled at the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai last May. The ten outward-facing enclosed suites with sliding doors are a novelty on the MAX and require an exemption from certain certification requirements. Designed by JPA Design, the Safran seats can be transformed into a 75in flatbed that will raise the standard for customers on flydubai's longest narrowbody routes.

A spokesperson noted: "The business suite was originally planned to be introduced on several of our latest aircraft in the last quarter of 2023. We look forward to seeing this new offering rolled out on our latest aircraft next year. We continue to work closely with our suppliers and revise our plans accordingly."

Growing the network is another priority, according to the spokesperson: "We have marked the addition of new destinations in 2023, including Cairo, Milan, Mogadishu, Neom, Pattaya and St Petersburg, giving our passengers more options to travel across our growing network. Our seasonal summer routes proved as popular as ever, with Olbia and Corfu joining for this summer season. We inaugurated operations to Mombasa in Kenya on January 17 and to Langkawi and Penang in Malaysia on February 10, [and also plan to resume our] seasonal summer routes to Batumi, Bodrum, Corfu, Dubrovnik, Mykonos, Olbia, Santorini, Tivat and Trabzon."

◀ Boeing 737-800s initially formed the backbone of the airline's fleet, with 62 examples on strength at the type's peak

"It has always been flydubai's strategy to invest in the most advanced and efficient aircraft"

▼ As well as the carrier's first widebody order, flydubai is opening a new maintenance facility and a pilot training centre



Why not fly it?



Leonard van den Broek provides an update on efforts to return a Lockheed F-104 Starfighter to flight at Volkel Air Base in the Netherlands

In November 1984, the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf) bid farewell to its F-104 Starfighters. Some 40 years later, 13 former RNLAf Starfighters remain in the Netherlands. Most are in museums or serve as gate guardians, except for Lockheed F-104G D-8114. This Starfighter resides in an old German hangar at Volkel Air Base, with a small group of volunteers working hard to get her back into flying condition.

The origins of the 'Historische Vliegtuigen Volkel' (HVv, Historic Fighters Volkel) group go back more than 20 years. The association was founded to restore a Republic F-84F Thunderstreak and a Lockheed F-104 Starfighter as gate guardians at Volkel Air Base. Hans Ruijgrok, outgoing manager of HVv, said: "After the two gate guardians, we worked on several small and large restoration projects. Gradually, the idea came up to restore a Starfighter to working condition as much as possible, preferably taxiing. Lt Col Harry 'Hopper' van Duren, then the deputy base commander at Volkel, said to us, 'Why don't you fly it?'"

In recent years, several airframes were candidates for this, but often, the technical and maintenance condition proved not good enough after all. In 2012, the D-8114 was obtained, in exchange for another Starfighter. After

an extensive maintenance inspection, the HVv started restoring the jet and ambitions have been steadily revised upwards. When the aircraft came to Volkel, no engine was available. Meanwhile, wiring harnesses and the hydraulic system have been repaired and the aircraft is increasingly in 'working' condition.

Ruijgrok said: "Before the F-104 came to Volkel, a number of wiring harnesses were cut. During the restoration, all of these were repaired, which was a hell

► The Dutch Starfighter Foundation and Historische Vliegtuigen Volkel are headed up by Hans Ruijgrok (left) and Hans van der Werf. All images Leonard van den Broek unless stated





of a job. We did that to keep the restoration process going. Replacing the cables can be done, but it would require a lot of time and money.”

The Netherlands had signed a contract with Lockheed in 1960 to purchase 138 Starfighters, including 18 two-seat TF-104Gs. These two-seaters all came off the production line at Lockheed in California while a significant number of the Dutch Starfighters were built under licence by Fokker. In total, the Dutch manufacturer assembled 350 F-104s for the Dutch and German air forces. The HVV's example, D-8114 (c/n 683-8114), was delivered to the RNLAF in October 1963. During its career, the aircraft flew with 311 and 312 squadrons from Volkel, and with 322 and 323 squadrons at Leeuwarden. After its retirement in 1984, it served as an instructional airframe at the Delft Technical University for many years. In 2008, the aircraft was transferred to the Nationaal Militair Museum at Soesterberg before moving to HVV at Volkel in 2012.

Growing ambitions also bring growing costs. That was the main reason for establishing the Dutch Starfighter Foundation (DSF). Whereas the HVV is strongly linked to Volkel Air Base and the Royal Netherlands Air Force, the DSF is a civilian foundation. Hans van der Werf, chairman of the DSF, said: “This allows the DSF to engage in fundraising, its mission is to support the HVV financially and otherwise in the restoration and maintenance of an F-104.”

From 1974 to 1979, Van der Werf was a display pilot on the '104. While the 78-year-old Van der Werf no longer has a valid type rating, he still hopes to fly in a Starfighter once more, if only in the back seat. He said:

◀ Lockheed F-104G Starfighter, D-8114 (c/n 683D-8114), basks in the sunshine outside its hangar at Volkel Air Base

“A Starfighter with a howling, smoking J79 engine is really something unique. It would be great to make that happen again”

▼ Volunteers have been working to restore the aircraft to airworthiness since 2012



“The more adversity we experience, the more we become convinced that we must succeed”

“There is a two-seat TF-104G for sale in America... It is flyable *and* it flew with the RNLAf as D-5810. We now hope to raise sufficient funds to purchase the aircraft and bring it back to the Netherlands.”

Reflecting on the aims of the DSF and HVV, Van der Werf said: “The sound of a Starfighter evokes special memories to many enthusiasts. A Starfighter with a howling, smoking [General Electric] J79 engine is really something unique. It would be great to make that happen again.”

Once the engine is in the aircraft, many more steps can be made in the process of restoration. Unfortunately, the foundation has had to overcome many setbacks. “We have been looking for a usable J79 jet engine for the Starfighter for years. Early last year, the unimaginable happened... we were offered an overhauled engine by a company from Canada. It turned out to be an unused ex-Dutch engine. We had arranged shipping of the J79 and everything was good to go when we hit a major roadblock – The J79 is classified as a ‘chromium(VI) item’, which meant importing it was no longer allowed.”

Van der Werf, clearly irritated, explained: “The Dutch government has become very cautious about anything that might contain hexavalent chromium [as it is a carcinogen and can cause lung cancer]. As such, anything containing chromium(VI) is subject to strict regulations... But the J79 engine does not contain chromium(VI). It could only be created when the engine is running, and we are nowhere near that point. It would take two to three years to get to a stage where we could run the engine, and we can use the intervening time to solve what is not an insurmountable problem.

“Earlier, there was a possibility of asbestos in the airframe and we had that cleaned up. We were also informed there was a source of radiation in the cockpit, which we have partly resolved by training two of our people as radiation experts. We are convinced that we can solve this problem too, but our willingness isn’t reflected in the agencies we depend on, unfortunately.”

Within the RNLAf, the HVV has to deal with a lot

of different forces. The HVV is part of the tradition chamber, which in turn falls under the Defence Museums. “Because we are part of the Defence Museums, we depend on co-operation from the air force. What makes it complicated is that someone will be enthusiastic and say, ‘You should fly it!’ only for their successor to come along a few years later with a completely different opinion.”

And time is running out for the HVV and DSF. Currently, there are still enough people within the foundation who have the knowledge and experience from having worked operationally on the Starfighter. That wealth of knowledge and expertise will gradually die out. “We want to make use of that while we still can” said Van der Werf. “Fortunately, there are also some enthusiastic young people within our foundation to whom we can transfer the knowledge and skills.”

The need to preserve historic aircraft like the Starfighter in original and working condition was demonstrated during the recent visit of an F-35 pilot. Van der Werf said: “This new F-35 pilot did not know what an F-104 was! I took him to our hangar one day and let him sit in our Starfighter. He sat there for almost an hour as I explained the technology – or lack of it – and began to better understand what information the F-35’s on-board computers use (wind, speed, altitude, etc), when dropping a bomb, for example. In an F-35, the on-board computers handle the ‘sensor fusion’ and the pilot is presented with the result on the screens. In an F-104, the pilot does all this himself – he reads information from the instruments and reacts accordingly. A good pilot masters that to become the best.”

Like all HVV and DSF volunteers, Van der Werf is determined, despite all the setbacks: “Why do we continue? Too many people have said, ‘it won’t work’ and all the adversity we have already faced only makes us more determined.”

Ruijgrok added: “The more adversity we experience, the more we become convinced that we must succeed.”

▼ The Starfighter flies in formation with a 311 Sqn F-16A, J-616 (c/n 6D-48), in 1983 Netherlands Institute of Military History





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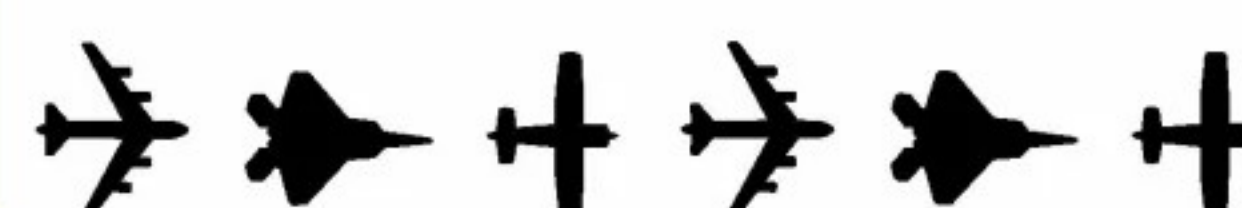
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For those about to RIAT...

What can we expect from the next Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) at RAF Fairford? And what is involved in securing participation for the world's largest military airshow?

Mark Broadbent finds out

The build-up to the next RIAT remains a perennial bright spot for many enthusiasts in the dark, damp and dreary midwinter. The ranks of tankers and fighters of the 80s and 90s are long gone, but the Tattoo remains the world's largest military airshow, a huge gathering of aviators from around the world with its extensive static park and day-long flying displays.

Invites

Putting on such a large annual feast is an immense task in numerous areas – commercial, infrastructure, logistics, fuel, engineering, airside operations,

transport and air traffic control, to name just a few.

Peter Reoch, RIAT's Head of Air Operations, explains what's involved in organising aircraft participation. "The process starts in the summer where we have to work with the MOD, the RAF and the Foreign & Commonwealth Development Office to get the list of approved, invited nations making sure that extending an invitation to an air force to participate aligns with policy."

A specific aircraft wish-list based on themes or anniversaries is created, considering what each air force has, any new or about-to-retire aircraft, what's relevant for the show's themes and, crucially, what's practical. Invitation letters to air force commanders, tailored year-to-year and with specific aircraft requests, are sent in late September/early October.

RIAT's Air Operations team of four permanent staff visit countries' embassies in London. They seek feedback on the previous year, provide an insight into the event's aspirations for the coming year and explain aircraft requests.

There follows what Peter calls "a waiting game"

▼ The Royal International Air Tattoo is widely regarded to be the world's largest military air show

Royal International Air Tattoo





▲ F-16s will likely be a frequent sight in the RIAT static display and the skies above RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire as the air show celebrates the 50th anniversary of the type's first flight AirTeamImages.com/Simon Willson

to find out accepted invites and the aircraft nations intend to send. It is not the case that RIAT 'book' military aircraft. They are allocated them.

Peter says: "Different nations do it differently. Some have dedicated offices whose sole job is to task aircraft to shows. Others don't; [responses] will come from the chief's office to say 'we wish to send this aeroplane'. With other nations, squadrons will email us to say 'we've been asked to send this aeroplane'.

"Some air forces are very efficient; we can start to collate that in January or February. Others are later in the planning process in April and May. It's an evolutionary process to build what we have coming to the show."

Peter continues: "A European air arm sending a pair of fighter jets we see year-on-year can be pretty straightforward in administration, whereas a South American nation sending a transport aircraft we've never seen before takes a lot more planning.

"That's what takes up the time of the permanent Air Operations department in the spring, making sure we have everything in place to welcome not only the aircraft but also the crews – 250 aircraft mean about 1,500 air and ground crew."

Evolution

Historically relationships between RIAT and individual squadrons, particularly in Europe, were part of securing aircraft participation. "Back in the 90s there was more cash around [for defence spending], more flying hours, more aeroplanes," Peter observes.

However, he says: "Nowadays – and this has changed even in the last five to ten years – air forces have to be assured they're getting value for their taxpayers' money. Every flying hour of a jet costing millions of pounds is scrutinised."

International airshow visits are part of an air force's annual budget and flying hours. Air forces must cut their cloth accordingly and, Peter notes, "it can't just be a case of 'we want a pair of F-16s for the weekend'. We've got to offer value to the crew – enjoying professional development, currency in

training requirements, networking."

Peter emphasises: "No aircraft goes to an airshow any more that's doing it for a jolly. [Airshow visits] are justified at a more senior level than was the case 20 or 30 years ago."

Does this make it more difficult to secure participation now? "It depends what sort of support you're after. At RIAT 2022, the first show post-COVID and post the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there was a real push by NATO air arms to be seen. It was a place to show a force of unity among European air arms."

The personal element still exists in some ways, Peter notes: "There are examples in recent history where chiefs come to the show and then come back the year after with their aeroplanes. There are chiefs who flew into the show ten [or] 20 years earlier and are now back as an air force commander. The legacy of the show helps us; there are probably more people in foreign air forces who know what RIAT is than who don't."

There is another consideration in securing participation. Many other major European airshows with substantial military input are organised by those nations' own air force, which enables direct 'bartering' with another air arm on sending assets to each other's events.

RIAT is disadvantaged in this way because it is not organised by the RAF but by RAF Charitable Trust Enterprises, an entirely separate commercial organisation.

Peter says: "Royal Air Force assets going abroad is good for us because we can't 'take, take, take'. We can't expect nations to send assets here if we don't send anything back. Reciprocation is important."

From F-16s to Canada

RIAT 2024's themes are Pushing the Boundaries in Air and Space, 50 years of the F-16 Fighting Falcon, NATO's 75th anniversary, and the Royal Canadian Air Force 100th anniversary.

Pushing the Boundaries involves specialised, modified and instrumented aircraft used for flight test, evaluation and scientific research. It will also look back at 100 years of British military test flying and the aviation industry will showcase new technological developments.



▲ Peter Reoch joined the Royal Air Forces Charitable Trust Enterprises as its head of air operations in January 2020, following a five-year stint as air show operations manager at the RAF Cosford Air Show Royal International Air Tattoo



▲ One of this year's themes celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the air arm's CF-18 Hornet display is set to return to RAF Fairford for the first time in six years [AirTeamImages.com/Matthieu Douhaire](https://www.airteamimages.com/Matthieu-Douhaire)

▼ A chronological line up of F-16s is planned for RIAT 2024, with the air show's head of air operations hoping that an example of the latest Block 70 model may be available to bring the type's half century up to date [Lockheed Martin](https://www.lockheedmartin.com)

A static line of F-16s from around the world and solo flying F-16s will mark the F-16 anniversary. Highlighting 75 years since NATO was established in April 1949 is fitting for RIAT, which since its inception in 1971 has demonstrated the NATO Alliance's value.

The Royal Canadian Air Force centenary will be celebrated in a special ground area hosting modern RCAF assets, historic former RCAF types and displays of Canadian culture. The modern RCAF participation will include the RCAF CF-18 Demonstration Team in the flying display on its first RIAT visit in six years.

Selecting themes

Peter explains how RIAT chooses the themes: "We have a planning document that looks about 20 years into the future to pick up key themes and airframe types. The document looks at particular aircraft anniversaries and can be used as a framework to focus things around."

"We've known for a number of years that the F-16's 50th anniversary was coming up so that was an obvious choice for 2024 – there's still lots of F-16 operators and it's still in production. The chance of a good turnout by operators is high, whereas we'd be less inclined to focus a theme on a 50th or 60th anniversary of a type that only two or three nations use."

Theme selection also involves aligning with the RAF's annual Global Air and Space Chiefs Conference, staged in the week before RIAT – and obviously it has to sell to the public at large. There's got to be "meat on the bones" to the themes, Peter says: "People have got to be able to walk around and see a tanker, a trainer or an F-16, or whatever the theme is. There's got to be a tangible link."

With the F-16 50th the plan is to show static display F-16s in a line arranged chronologically in block variant numbers. "Whether it's an enthusiast who knows the differences between blocks or a family visitor, people will be able to see the evolution."

Special tails and attractive colour schemes are inevitably desired, and there is an aspiration to get the latest F-16V. "Whether we can or not is out of our control," Peter points out.

Quality participation

The aim is always "to focus on the quality, not the quantity", Peter says: "If we know an aircraft is going out of service, and it's a much-loved type, we'll always try to attract those."

Classic jets and attracting nations new to the show, or those that haven't visited for some years, are on the agenda too. And 2024's Pushing the Boundaries has created "quite a long wish list of interesting modified and high-visibility-colour scheme test aeroplanes".

Back in the 1980s, the Tattoo ran formal symposia based on the theme. This hasn't happened for some years, but Peter says the themes substantively help participation.



SkyTanker in 2023, for instance, led to an informal gathering of the tanker crews in attendance. Looking ahead to this year, he says: “Let’s say we get Turkish, Belgian, Polish, Portuguese F-16s – how many times will all those pilots get together, bar a Tiger Meet? Not many times, I’d imagine.

“The professional development from having nations together – even down to pilots sitting together on a picnic bench of an evening having a can of beer – helps justify their coming to the show.”

Aligning themes and aircraft anniversaries is possible too. “For example, 2027 will be the 70th anniversary of the Hercules [service entry] and also the 20th anniversary of the A400M [starting assembly] – so that lends itself to an airlift theme that year.”

Peter adds the themes “help in making sure you have stand-out flypasts or moments each year, and make people say ‘that was RIAT 2024, they had those special participants in the display’. It’s trying to use vignettes so it’s not a carbon copy every year.”

Static display

With 250 aircraft coming into Fairford, Peter emphasises that planning the static display is the more complex element of the Air Operations team’s job.

He explains: “You have to balance creative aspirations with the operational realities. There are certain large aeroplanes that can only park in certain locations. Different aircraft have different requirements.

“With Fairford’s layout you very much have to build from the centre outwards. Enthusiasts that come to the show year on year will notice trends – certain aeroplanes always arrive early on a Wednesday morning to park in the middle.”

However, Peter points out: “Many air forces now have less assets to play with and they don’t want to lose their asset for three days – they want to get it in as late as they can on Thursday or Friday.”

Such operational requirements have to be balanced with the organisers’ desired static layout. The aim, Peter says, is to “try and tell a story or theme particular areas”. As well as the chronological F-16



line, in 2024 the plan is to put all the flight test aeroplanes together. “Whilst the enthusiast can walk round and know every aircraft, other visitors can’t, so it’s about, ‘here are all the aeroplanes used for this role,’” Peter says.

“I wouldn’t want to have all the fighters at one end. Sometimes there’s merit, for example this year in having all the F-16s together, but sometimes there’s merit in having an F-16, a Hornet and a Mirage next to each other to show there’s variety still.” It is intended for each gate to have what Peter calls “a bit of a wow factor”.

‘Changing flavour’

Speaking about participation more broadly, Peter notes: “A few years ago, a Tornado wasn’t a star item. We’re now approaching years where German and Italian Tornados are maybe in their last few visits.

“The flavour of what’s exotic changes. F-16s used to be ten-a-penny and now we’re in the age of the Belgians, Dutch and Danes getting rid of theirs, so enthusiasts want final pictures of that particular aeroplane.”

Overall, he says: “There’ll always be a military focus so there’ll always be more fast jets than you’d expect at another airshow, but it’s about having a mix of jets, display teams, transports and helicopters to create an interesting, dynamic programme.”

▲ The 2019 retirement of the RAF’s Tornado GR4 fleet, coupled with drawdowns of the Italian and German fleets, means that the Panavia type is becoming an increasingly clamoured-for type [AirTeamImages.com/](https://www.airteamimages.com/) Ian Tate

“It is not the case that RIAT ‘book’ military aircraft... they are allocated them”

▼ Anniversaries for both the Airbus Military A400M Atlas and the Lockheed Martin C-130 Hercules (pictured) in 2027 lend themselves to a possible airlift theme for RIAT 2027 Martin Needham



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A selection of the most interesting aircraft to have recently visited air bases in the UK

▲ This Swiss Air Force McDonnell Douglas F/A-18D Hornet was one of four two-seat examples to take part in Exercise Yorknite at RAF Leeming in November and December 2023
AirTeamImages.com/NCLairpics

RAF Brize Norton

- 1/12 A31-212 C-17A 36 Sqn, RAAF dep 4th, also 5th
- 5/12 G-988 C-130H 336 Sqn, Royal Netherlands AF
- 9/12 A39-005 KC-30A 36 Sqn, RAAF n/s; 330002 CC-330 427 Sqn, RCAF n/s
- 14/12 272 KC-707 120 Sqn, Israeli Defence Force also 25th & 27th-29th
- 22/12 130614 CC-130J 436 Sqn, RCAF

RAF Coningsby

- 1/12 J-5234 F/A-18D Swiss AF dep 4th to Leeming
- 4/12 ZZ523 Wildcat AH11 Regt, AAC

RAF Cosford

- 6/12 XX119/AI Jaguar GR3A dep DSAE by road to Lossiemouth for preservation with 6 Sqn, RAF

RAF Fairford

- 12/12 82-1066/WM B-2A 509th BW, USAF dep 18th
- 13/12 12-5769 MC-10J 67th SOS, 352nd SOW, USAF
- 16/12 11-5738/RS C-130J-30 37th AS, 86th AW, USAF; 15-5831/RS C-130J-30 37th AS, 86th AW, USAF also 17th, 29th & 30th
- 17/12 08-8601/RS C-130J-30 37th AS, 86th AW, USAF
- 18/12 07-8614/RS C-130J-30 37th AS, 86th AW, USAF also 30th
- 30/12 07-4635/RS C-130J-30 37th AS, 86th AW, USAF

RAF Lakenheath

- 4/12 N503XX, N504XX, N508XX & N511XX Hawk 67s Ravn Aerospace arrived on TDY, aircraft are all ex-Republic of Korea AF

- 10/12 07-7186 C-17A 437th/315th AW, USAF dep 12th

- 13/12 3085 A319-115(ACJ) Czech AF also 14th

- 14/12 09-9210 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF

- 15/12 06-6164 C-17A 60th/349th AMW, USAF

- 28/12 60-0333 KC-135R 100th ARW, USAF

RAF Leeming

- 4/12 J-5017 F/A-18C & J-5236 F/A-18D Swiss AF both dep 14th; J-5232 & J-5238 F/A-18Ds Swiss AF dep after Exercise Yorknite 23

- 5/12 J-5234 F/A-18D Swiss AF dep after Exercise Yorknite 23

- 14/12 J-5002, J-5003, J-5005, J-5010, J-5011, J-5014 & J-5021 F/A-18Cs Swiss AF dep after Exercise Yorknite 23

RAF Lossiemouth

- 8/12 A97-441 & A97-442 C-130J-30s 37 Sqn, RAAF both n/s

DSEME Lyneham

The Defence School of Electrico-Mechanical Engineering is believed to have acquired Apache AH1s ZJ191 & ZJ223 from Wattisham

RAF Mildenhall

- 1/12 60-0356 KC-135R 22nd ARW, USAF

- 3/12 62-4127/OF TC-135W 55th WG, USAF dep 7th

- 4/12 58-0066 & 59-1459 KC-135Rs 6th ARW, USAF both dep 7th; 58-0106 KC-135R 106th ARS, AI ANG dep 7th

- 5/12 86-0014 C-5M 337th AS, AFRC n/s; 63-8887 KC-135R 6th ARW, USAF

- 6/12 62-3569 KC-135R 22nd ARW, USAF dep 8th; 11-9001 E-11A 430th EECS, USAF dep 8th; 295 KC-707 120 Sqn, Israeli Defence Force also 7th



- 8/12 62-4131/OF RC-135W 55th WG, USAF
- 9/11 86-0011 C-5M 60th/349th AMU, USAF n/s
- 10/12 170274 KC-130J VMGR-252, USMC
- 11/12 62-4138/OF RC-135W 55th WG, USAF dep 13th
- 12/12 91-9141 C-130H on delivery to Polish AF; 64-14842/OF RC-135V 55th WG, USAF n/s
- 13/12 83-1285 C-5M 436th/512nd AW, USAF n/s; 272 KC-707 120 Sqn, Israeli Defence Force

- 14/12 04-4130 C-17A 305th/514th AMW, USAF dep 18th
- 15/12 60-0343 KC-135T 22nd ARW, USAF dep 18th; 68-8044/NF KC-135R 328th ARS, AFRC n/s
- 17/12 07-7171 C-17A 305th/514th AMW, USAF; 16-5883/RS C-130J-30 37th AS, 86th AW, USA; 57-1512 KC-135R 756th ARS, AFRC dep 19th
- 20/12 63-7981 KC-135R 108th ARS, IL ANG n/s
- 27/12 04-4133 C-17A 305th/514th AMW, USAF
- 28/12 85-0007 C-5M 436th/512nd AW, USAF dep 31st
- 29/12 63-7995 KC-135R 22nd ARW, USAF

RAF Northolt

- 5/12 130604 CC-130J 436 Sqn, RCAF; XV666 Sea King HU5 HeliOps
- 6/12 90-26266 & 96-26706 UH-60Ls A/2-1 Avn, US Army both dep (arrived 28/11)
- 10/12 910512 C-26D AOD, Sigonella dep 13th
- 11/12 103/YT Xingu EAT319, French AF
- 12/12 ZZ503 Avenger T3 750 NAS, RN n/s
- 19/12 97-01944 C-37A USAPAT n/s; ZJ994/C Merlin HC4A 846 NAS, RN
- 20/12 285 C-295MPA 101 Sqn, Irish Air Corps

RAF Shawbury

- 4/12 ZZ388 Wildcat A11 Regt, AAC
- 6/12 79+43 NH90-TTH THR10, German Army
- 12/12 XX281 Hawk T1A arrived by road from Valley for conversion to Red Arrows standards

RAF Waddington

- 1/12 68 Xingu 28F, French Navy also 4th; 092/YL Xingu EAT319, French AF; 196/64-HD CN235M-300 ET03.062, French AF
- 4/12 ZZ523 Wildcat AH1 661 Sqn, AAC; ZJ125/J Merlin HC4 845 NAS, RN n/s
- 5/12 G-988 C-130H 336 Sqn, Royal Netherlands AF
- 6/12 84-0126 C-21A 76th AS, 86th AW, USAF n/s; 144620 CC-144D 412 Sqn, RCAF
- 8/12 130604 CC-130J 436 Sqn, RCAF
- 15/12 71 Xingu 28F, French Navy

MAR

UK air base movements from MAR: www.militaryaviationreview.com
23 Waggoners Way, Morton, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 0XR

▼ Four Ravn Aerospace BAE Systems Hawk Mk.67s have recently been deployed to RAF Lakenheath to take on the adversary role from ATAC Douglas A-4N Skyhawks and Draken Dassault/Dornier Alpha Jets Peter R Foster





▲ Condor supplied Boeing 757-300, D-ABOM (c/n 29022), as transport for the Bayern Munich squad ahead of their UEFA Champions League tie against Manchester United
AirTeamImages.com/Simon Willson

A round-up of notable aircraft visiting UK airports

Aberdeen

1/12 9H-MAS Global 5500; LX-FLG PC-12NGX
2/12 PH-SLE Beech 200
5/12 EI-HHC DA42
6/12 F-HLRS Phenom 300 Inverness diversion
11/12 2-OTOD CitationJet 525B CJ3+
13/12 SP-ESK 737-8Q8 Enter Air; D-AGMP E190AR German Airways; D-CHZF Citation 550 Bravo
14/12 D-FLAT PC-12NGX; OO-ROK CitationJet 525C CJ4
15/12 C-168 Challenger 604 Esk 721, Royal Danish AF
17/12 N889KH Gulfstream V
18/12 G-LMTG ATR 72-600 Loganair on delivery
19/12 G-TNEC A320-251NX British Airways f/v; D-CLIF Phenom 300
22/12 OO-HHO Falcon 8X; D-CLIK CitationJet 525C CJ4
23/12 TF-SIF Dash 8-Q314 Icelandic Coast Guard; EJ-PRLN Citation 560XLS+
26/12 OO-JID CitationJet 525 CJ1
28/12 D-IFIS CitationJet 525 CJ2+
29/12 OE-EBF PC-12NGX

Belfast City

1/11 D-CEMO Hawker 750XP
4/11 PH-NXP E195E2 KLM Cityhopper
6/11 I-MDEA Citation 560XLS
15/11 D-CITY Learjet 35A
16/11 CS-GLH Global 6000 NetJets Europe
18/11 PH-NXB E195E2 KLM Cityhopper
19/11 OY-ASD 737-8FZ Airseven
23/11 EJ-REVA Hawker 850XP
25/11 PH-NXC E195E2 KLM Cityhopper

Birmingham

1/12 9H-EUN A320-214 Eurowings Malta f/v; OE-LFM ATR 72-202(F) Zimex Aviation f/v; UK67002 767-33P(ER)(BCF) Uzbekistan Airlines also 6th, 8th & 14th; D-CIFM Citation 680 Sovereign; N721KJ Gulfstream G550

2/12 N537CA 747-446F National Airlines, also 6th & 10th; 295 KC-707 120 Sqn, Israeli Defence Force f/v, Mildenhall weather diversion; ZZ343 Voyager KC2 10/101 Sqn, RAF, Brize Norton weather diversion; CS-GLJ Global 6500 NetJets Europe; D-AFAG Challenger 604; N115LR Gulfstream G450 also 17th; PH-DIX PC12/45
3/12 EI-IHZ 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; G-DHLW 777-F6N DHL East Midlands weather diversion; TC-SMA 737MAX-8 SunExpress; LX-TWO Learjet 45; M-CVGL Global 5000 also 9th & 18th
4/12 EC-NDC A320-271N Vueling; OY-SRK 767-204(BDSF) Maersk Air Cargo East Midlands re-route; D-COPI PC-24; EJ-REVA Hawker 800XP also 22nd
5/12 TC-SOV 737-8HC SunExpress; D-CHMS PC-24; N318LE Gulfstream G600
6/12 F-HZUL A220-300 Air France f/v; EC-JIU CitationJet 525 CJ1; SP-AIN Citation 560XL also 11th & 30th
7/12 TF-BBL 737-490(SJ0) also 8th B734 BBD f/v; 9H-VTD Global 6000 VistaJet; HA-SCU Citation 650 VII
8/12 9H-EWA A320-214(SL) Eurowings Malta; G-UZLP A320-251N easyJet f/v; 9H-649FX Gulfstream G650ER also 27th; OE-HCU Challenger 350; TC-RSE Learjet 45
9/12 G-UZMF A321-251NX easyJet f/v; HB-JXT A32A easyJet Switzerland; SX-NEO A320-271N Aegean Airlines
10/12 9H-WBZ A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta f/v; D-AEEB A321-251NX Eurowings; G-SUNB A321-251NX Jet2; TC-SOK 737MAX-8 SunExpress
11/12 N919CA 747-428(BCF) National Airlines
12/12 EI-IHY 737MAX-8200 Ryanair f/v; TC-SMB 737MAX-8 SunExpress; YL-AAO CS300 Air Baltic ops for Swiss international; 2-FFLY Cirrus SR22T
13/12 9H-WAT A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta; 258 Learjet 45 MATS, Irish Air Corps
14/12 9H-WBS A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta; HB-JXU A320-214(SL) easyJet Switzerland; D-FBOX PC-12NGX
15/12 G-SUNE A321-251NX Jet2; 9H-VIE Global 7500 VistaJet; T7-RIC Global 6000
17/12 9H-QCB 737-8AS RYR f/v; 9H-WAH A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta; EC-MIY ATR 72-500 Swiftair; TC-SME 737MAX-8 SunExpress; D-BALL Praetor 600; D-CPTN PC-24; N313AG Gulfstream G650ER
18/12 D-AASG Dash 9-Q402 Avanti Air; D-AEUJ A321-211(P2F) Lufthansa Cargo; YL-RAE Saab 340B(F) RAF-Avia; D-ANCE Legacy 650E; OH-ZRH PC-12NG
19/12 TC-SOM 737MAX-8 SunExpress; D-CMXM Phenom 300; T7-SYC Avanti II
20/12 9H-WAX A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta; EC-LYJ ATR 72-500 Swiftair; OY-SYA 767-3P6(ER)(BDSF) Maersk Air Cargo

KEY

f/v first visit
n/s night stop
o/s overshoot

21/12 EI-IJC 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; OO-SNQ A320-214(SL) Brussels Airlines; TC-RDT A321-251NX Pegasus, new service; G-EILA A330-302 Aer Lingus UK & TC-RBT A321-251NX Pegasus both Manchester weather diversions; D-ATWO Challenger 605

22/12 OE-IDS A320-214 easyJet Europe; LX-RHC Challenger 605; OK-PPP Beech 400XP; P4-USA Learjet 60XR

23/12 TC-RDD A321-251NX Pegasus; CN-TMB Hawker 800XP; N656FG Falcon 8X; OE-EGO PC-12NG; OO-ACO Citation 510 Mustang

24/12 D-AIEJ A321-271NX Lufthansa f/v; TC-SPO 737-8MA SunExpress; TF-AMU 747-48EF Network Aviation; 9H-VJM Global 6000 VistaJet; CN-TMH Legacy 600; D-CUNI Learjet 45

25/12 D-CPMU Learjet 60; 26/12 D-AEEA A321-251NX Eurowings; TC-RDI A321-251NX Pegasus f/v; TC-SMD 737MAX-8 SunExpress; D-CMHS PC-24; M-ABJL Gulfstream G650

28/12 9H-WDB A320-232(SL) Wizz Air Malta; TC-RBN A321-251NX Pegasus; 9H-NSV Global Express; D-CMMP Phenom 300

29/12 D-AIEA A321-271N Lufthansa; HB-JXS A32A easyJet Switzerland; OE-GMJ Citation 56XLS+

30/12 TC-RBM A321-251NX Pegasus PGT; ZM403 Atlas C1 24/70 Sqns, RAF; D-AAAX Challenger 604; OK-DJB Nextant 400XT

31/12 TC-SPR 737-9AS SunExpress

Blackpool

1/9 I-VICC Paertenavia P.68B; M-ANTA Gulfstream G600; OK-PHE Phenom 300; PH-BIT Cessna F172N

3/9 D-CPMU Learjet 60; M-OUSY Gulfstream G280

4/9 F-BNFX PA-28-180; N6501S Bell 206L-3

6/9 D-CITY Learjet 35A; M-BEEF H135

8/9 OK-JFA Nextant 400XT

9/9 SP-IZU CitationJet 525 CJ1

11/9 9H-MGM Citation 560XL

14/9 D-CAKE Phenom 300; M-ELIS Bell 407GX; OE-FGC Citation 525M2

15/9 D-CDRF Learjet 35A; LX-FLG PC-12NG

17/9 SE-RKL Gulfstream G550

18/9 D-CTWO Learjet 35A

21/9 HB-KKM Cirrus SR22T

23/9 N750AY Pacific Aerospace P-750 XSTOL

24/9 N185RH Cessna 185A

27/9 HB-ZBD EC120B

28/12 YU-RDA Citation 560XLS+

29/12 SE-RNR Challenger 350

30/12 N575BM Cirrus SF50 new resident

Bristol

1/10 D-BEER Legacy 500; 9H-FOM Phenom 100

2/10 2-TRVL Challenger 650

3/10 9H-WDF A321-271NX Wizz Air; PH-SFH PC-12NGX

5/10 D-AFBS Legacy 650E

8/10 D-CASH Phenom 300; LX-PCF PC-24

9/10 N113KQ Quest Kodiak 100; PH-EXG E175STD KLM Cityhopper Cardiff diversion

11/10 9H-FCA Global 6000; N589K Gulfstream G550; 9H-VVC 737MAX-8200 Ryanair

13/10 LX-JFF PC-12NG; OE-LYS Global 7500 also 16th; TC-SOA 737-8HC SunExpress

14/10 N1RC Challenger 350; 9H-WZS A320-232(SL) Wizz Air; F-FVPH & PH-RIW Robinson R44s; F-HGDE & PH-HCF Guimbal Cabri G2s; PH-HCH H120; PH-UNN EC120B

16/10 HB-FOW PC-12/45

17/10 OH-RBX Citation 560XL; YU-TUU Citation 550 Bravo; 9H-WDV A321-271NX Wizz Air

18/10 OE-LIM Gulfstream G550 also 20th; OO-SBO Falcon 8X

19/10 D-CICU Learjet 45; 9H-VVD 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; 84-0085 C-21A 76th AS, 86th AW, USAF; SX-DVY A320-232 Aegean Airlines

22/10 CS-TFR Learjet 45

23/10 OH-PBL PC-12NG

24/10 PH-EZO E190STD KLM Cityhopper

26/10 D-CAAE Learjet 55

27/10 LX-LXL & OO-SBO Falcon 8Xs; T7-NKS Hawker 800XP

28/10 EI-KVI ATR 72-500 Uep!Fly ops for Aer Lingus

29/10 LX-PCJ & LX-PCK PC-24s; N331AB Gulfstream G650ER

30/10 D-AMWO E190AR German Airways ops for KLM Cityhopper

31/10 TC-RSC Learjet 45

1/11 OH-RDS PC-12NGX; 9H-PIK Citation 550 II

3/11 D-CROG Phenom 300; SX-DVY A320-232 Aegean Airlines; T7-NKS Hawker 800XP; OE-LYS Global 7500

4/11 D-CICU Learjet 45

5/11 OO-VMF Citation 560XLS+; 9H-WBT A320-232(SL) Wizz Air

6/11 D-APRI E190SR German Airways ops for KLM Cityhopper; SX-DGY A320-232 Aegean Airlines

11/11 9H-VJZ Global 6000 VistaJet

14/11 D-CAAE Learjet 55 also 21st

16/11 D-CPMI Challenger 350

17/11 D-AKJC E190SR German Airways ops for KLM Cityhopper; OK-PHO Phenom 300; SX-DGC A320-232 Aegean Airlines

19/11 D-CBBS Phenom 300; N703RJ Global XRS; TC-RSH Challenger 605

20/11 D-IVAA Citation 510 Mustang; N44GX Global 6000

21/11 9H-SPEED Praetor 600

22/11 D-ACJJ E190LR German Airways ops for KLM Cityhopper

25/11 A7-CGJ Gulfstream G650ER Qatar Executive also 30th

26/11 D-IAAT Phenom 100; OE-HGG Challenger 350; OH-RBX Citation 560XL

28/11 D-IAAB Phenom 100

29/11 9H-SSG Falcon 100

▼ This Airbus A330-300P2F, G-EODS (c/n 713), made its first visit to Manchester Airport in December when it received attention from STS Aviation Group’s maintenance facility at the hub Nik French



East Midlands

- 1/12** LX-NCL 747-4EVERF Cargolux; A7-BFM 777-FDZ & A7-BFP 777-F Qatar Cargo; D-CASH Phenom 300; OO-MST C510 Mustang also 3rd
- 2/12** D-CCCA Learjet 35A
- 3/12** SX-RJB Citation 560XLS
- 5/12** D-IBLU Citation M2
- 6/12** 9H-PMN CitationJet 525A CJ2; OK-TKJ PC-12NGX; N180FB Avanti
- 7/12** PH-EZG E190STD KLM Cityhopper Leeds Diversion; 8/12 OO-SSA A319-111 Brussels Airlines for painting; G-SUNF A321-251NX Jet 2 for painting
- 10/12** I-JENK E190STD Air Dolomiti for painting from Lufthansa to Air Dolomiti scheme
- 11/12** C-FCPD 767-316 (ER)(BDSF) Cargojet f/v; D-CITA Learjet 60 also 13th
- 12/12** HS-KVS Gulfstream G650ER; N117EA Eclipse EA500
- 13/12** T7-DAT Avanti II
- 14/12** YL-RAE Saab 340B RAF-Avia; D-CAKE Phenom 300; OM-NXT CitationJet 525 CJ1
- 15/12** F-HPIL PC-12NGX
- 16/12** OO-SSB A319-111 Brussels Airline for painting; D-AASH Dash 8-Q402 Avanti Airlines
- 17/12** A9C-DHAA 767-3 (ER)(BDSF) DHL International
- 18/12** OY-YFT Dash 8-Q402 ex-Flybe, for painting for Sky Alps; G-SUNC A321-251NX Jet2 for painting; N815PA Global 5000
- 19/12** OO-KIN Citation 680 Sovereign also 22nd
- 21/12** N420MB A321-211(PCF) Smart Lynx Malta for painting
- 22/12** 9H-WAY A321-271X Wizz Air Malta & HA-LVC A321-271X Wizz Air both Leeds diversions
- 23/12** T7-SLXP PC-12/47 also 28th; SP-DOM Learjet 60XR
- 25/12** SE-RNP CitationJet 525A CJ2+
- 27/12** OO-TCH A320-214 Brussels Airlines for painting
- 28/12** SE-RVZ Citation 525M2
- 29/12** LZ-CGE 738-86J(SF) Cargoair f/v; G-UJEB A320-251N Easyjet Gatwick diversion
- 30/12** OO-AMR CitationJet 525A CJ2+
- 31/12** G-WUNA A321-271NX Wizz Air UK Gatwick diversion; EC-NLJ A321-231 Privilege Style ops for TUI; OO-ROK CitationJet 525C CJ4

Gatwick

- 2/12** G-REXB Beech B200GT; N78AG Gulfstream IVSP
- 3/12** D-AIJB A320-271N Lufthansa; EC-NOP A320-214 Volotea Airlines; EI-IHZ 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; ET-AYM A350-941 Ethiopian Airlines; 9H-QDW 737-8AS Ryanair
- 4/12** D-AIDD A321-231 Lufthansa; 9H-QCL 737-8AS Ryanair 9H-WDZ A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta
- 5/12** D-AINI A320-271N Lufthansa; EC-OCI A321-271NX Iberia Express; ET-AUC A350-941 Ethiopian Airlines

- 6/12** SX-NAA A321-271NX Aegean Airlines; 2235/F-RAFZ AS332L1 EH03.067, French AF; G-LEXS A109E
- 7/12** G-JZHE 737-8K2 Jet2; G-WUKY A321-271NX Wizz Air UK; HZ-AR29 787-10 Saudia
- 8/12** D-AINQ A320-271N Lufthansa; G-JZDC 737-82R Jet2; SE-RGV A319-111 Braathens International
- 9/12** HZ-AR28 787-10 Saudia
- 10/12** EC-NOL A320-214 Volotea Airlines
- 11/12** EI-LRE A321-253NX Aer Lingus; G-EJCP A320-214(SL) easyJet from Stansted still not in service; G-WUKX A321-271NX Wizz Air UK
- 12/12** B-2727 787-8 China Southern Airlines new service from Zhengzhou; ET-AWP A350-941 Ethiopian Airlines
- 13/12** EC-NTM A320-216 Volotea Airlines; SX-NAD A321-271NX Aegean Airlines
- 14/12** D-AISX A321-231 Lufthansa
- 16/12** B-2725 787-8 China Southern Airlines; G-DRT0 737-8JP Jet2
- 17/12** D-AHLK 737-8K5TUIFly ops for TUI Airways; EC-NOS A320-216 Volotea Airlines; VT-ANS 787-8 Air India; 9H-WDY A321-271NX Wizz Air Malta
- 19/12** B-2788 787-8 China Southern Airlines; D-AIDC A321-231 Lufthansa; ET-ATY A350-941 Ethiopian Airlines
- 21/12** D-BADA Do328JET ADAC; EC-NOM A320-214 Volotea Airlines; ET-AUA A350-941 Ethiopian Airlines Manchester diversion; ET-AWM A350-941 Ethiopian Airlines; OM-GTK 737-86N Go2Sky ops for TUI Airways; 9H-EFS A330-202 Maleth-Aero
- 22/12** G-JZBW 737-85P Jet2; LZ-EAF A320-214 Electra Airways ops for Air Arabia Maroc; SE-RTM 737MAX-8 Norwegian Air Sweden
- 23/12** D-AIEA A321-271NX Lufthansa; N4077J A321-271NX JetBlue; HZ-MS4C Gulfstream G450
- 24/12** D-ATUO 737-8K5 TUIFly ops for TUI Airways; SE-RTL 737MAX-8 Norwegian Air Sweden
- 26/12** B-2726 787-8 China Southern Airlines
- 28/12** OE-IDS A320-214 easyJet Europe; YL-ABS A220-300 Air Baltic
- 29/12** D-AIEN A321-271NX Lufthansa

Glasgow Prestwick

- Chevron:** LN-LNH re-registered M-ABSD remains in hangar; OO-JLO 737 partially dismantled; N371BC 737 remains stored, re-registered LY-CER for KlasJet
- ATF Prestwick:** RCAF CC-130Js 130601, 130604, 130614 remain based
- 1/11** UR-CQD An-26B Vulkan Air; 02-1109 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF
- 2/11** EI-WFI Challenger 605; D-FCMM TBM 940; 01-0189 C-17A 155th AS, Tn ANG
- 3/11** 09-9209 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF also 5th; HB-FSZ PC-12NGX c/n 2317 on delivery; 9H-PMN CitationJet 525A CJ2; 17-46025 KC-46A 22nd ARW, USAF dep 5th
- 4/11** OK-PHA Phenom 300; UR-CNN An-12B Cavok Air; dep 10th; 07-7184 &10-0222 C-17As 437th/315th AW, USAF
- 5/11** 05-5143 C-17A 89th AS, AFRC, USAF; 02-1098 C-17A 305th/514th AMW, USAF; SP-RUM 737-73S RYR to hangar, dep 15th





◀ Air Alliance Learjet 35A, D-CITY (c/n 35-177), visited Aberdeen mid-November
AirTeamimages.com/Joel Basler

6/11 06-6165 C-17A 436th/512nd AW, USAF
7/11 G-CLXT ATR 72-212(F) West Atlantic; 06-6158 C-17A 60th/349th AMW, USAF; EI-GZV ATR 72-600 Aer Lingus training; 08-8196 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF, also 12th; 07-7169 C-17A 436th/512nd AW, USAF; G-WUKF A320-232(SL) Wizz Air UK to Chevron hangar
8/11 10-0221 C-17A 437th/315th AW, USAF; UR-CKL An-12BK Cavok Air
9/11 09-9209 C-17A 662nd/446th AW, USAF; 92-3294 C-17A 156th AS, NC ANG dep 11th; N617JH Global 6000
10/11 03-3118 C-17A 183rd AS, Ms ANG; 05-5143 C-17A 89th AS, AFRC; PH-VTK PC-12/45; 1224 C-17A UAE AF dep 12th
11/11 PH-HZO 737-8K2 Transavia training; N291AS Beech 350 Lasai Aviation
12/11 19-46064 KC-46A 305th/514th AMW, USAF; 02-1108 & 08-8196 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF; N478GS Gulfstream IV(SP) also 13th; G-EUUS A320-232 British Airways training; 1228 C-17A UAE AF dep 15th also 26th
13/11 06-6168 C-17A 436th/512nd AW, USAF; 03-3127 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF; 13-0009 A400M 211 Filo, Turkish AF n/s, also 16th n/s; 03-3118 C-17A 183rd AS, Ms ANG
14/11 G-NPTF ATR 72-202(F) West Atlantic UK mail flight also 21st; 02-1098 C-17A 305th/514th AMW, USAF; 63-8017 KC-135R 314th ARS, AFRC dep 16th; 168205 UC-12W USMC; 99-0059 C-17A 62nd/446th AW, USAF
15/11 G-CLXT ATR 72-212(F) West Atlantic UK mail flight; 1225 C-17A UAE AF n/s; HB-FQC PC-12NGX c/n 2321 on delivery; SP-MRG 767-35H(ER)(BDSF) Skytaxi
16/11 17-5865 & 19-5932 C130J-30s 165th AS, Ky ANG; 58-0074 KC-135T 171st ARW Pa ANG; ZZ514, ZZ516, ZZ528 AW159 Wildcat HMA2s 825 NAS, RN to HMS Gannet TDY until 22nd
17/11 295 KC-707 120 Sqn Israeli Defence Force also 18th; 13-0009 A400M Turkish AF dep 18th; HB-FQF PC-12NGX c/n 2324 on delivery; HB-VZM PC-24; VQ-BOK Global 7500 training; HB-JJT Citation 680 Sovereign dep 19th; 164995/AX C-130T Vr-53, USN also 23rd
18/11 19-40646 & 19-46007 KC-46As 305th/514th AMW, USAF; both dep 20th
19/11 SP-RSX 737-8AS Ryanair to hangar dep 23rd
20/11 15-5893 C-130J-30 165th AS, KY AMG; HB-FQA PC-12NGX c/n 2318 on delivery; 01-1461 C-130J-30 115th AS, Ca ANG
21/11 G-JZHR 737-8MG Jet 2 training; 03-3120 C-17A62nd/446th AW, USAF; 07-7173 C-17A 436th/512nd AW, USAF
22/11 1228 C-17A UAE AF; N960JR TBM 960
24/11 CS-CHA Challenger 350 NetJets Europe; OK-PHO Phenom 300; N44WN TBM 900; 08-8198 C-17A 437th/315th AW, USAF
25/11 20-46073 305th/514th AMW, USAF; 86-0027 & 85-0029 KC-10A 60th/349th AMW, USAF; 16-46017 KC-46A 22nd ARW, USAF; 92-1531 & 92-1536 C-130Hs 187th AS, Wy ANG
26/11 1226 C-17A UAE AF n/s also 30th n/s; 92-1537 C-130H 187th AS, Wy ANG; VQ-BVB 747-83QF Silk Way West Airlines
27/11 84-0083 C-21A 76th AS, 86th AW, USAF; G-JMCH 737-476(SF) West Atlantic UK training; HB-FQI PC-12NGX c/n 2327 on delivery
28/11 G-NPTH 737-43Q(SF) West Atlantic UK; G-JZHU 737-8MG Jet2 training; 10-0215 C-17A 437th/315th AW, USAF

29/11 G-JMCK 737-4D7(SF) West Atlantic UK mail flight; G-DRTZ 737-8AS Jet2 training; 130603 C-130J RCAF replaced by 130601 at ATF Prestwick; KAF342 C-17A 41 Sqn, Kuwait AF dep 1/2
30/11 G-JMCZ 737-4K5(SF) West Atlantic UK; N325AF PC-12NGX c/n 2325 on delivery; N128SK Falcon 8X

Guernsey

1/11 9H-WIT PC-12NG
3/11 N208D Cessna 208B
9/11 N50RP Gulfstream G550; N62G DA62
13/11 HB-VPL Premier 1A
14/11 N502WS Cirrus SF50
15/11 N3117J PA-46 JetPROP DLX; F-GYKL Robin DR400/160; PH-SFG PC-12NGX
17/11 D-CPTN PC-24
20/11 N3Q Cirrus SF50
22/11 F-HBAI Avanti; N755JG Citation 560XL
23/11 N35AL DA42; N468DB Beech 200; F-HDSR DA40D
27/11 F-HJFP PC-12NG; LX-JFF PC-12NG
28/11 N542MP HondaJet; LX-JFV PC-12NG

Heathrow

18/12 CC-BBB 787-8 LATAM Airlines
19/12 EI-HXB A321-271NX ITA Airways
20/12 N17015 787-10 United Airlines
21/12 EI-SIW A320-251N SAS; G-TNEB A321-251NX British Airways on delivery
22/12 9H-EWA A320-214SL Eurowings; UK78702 787-8 Uzbekistan Airways
23/12 SX-NEG A320-271N Aegean Airlines
26/12 D-AIJN A320-271N Lufthansa
30/12 SU-GFR A321-251NX Egyptair
2/1 D-AERO Legacy 650
5/1 EI-SCE A320-251N SAS
6/1 A7-BTA 777-F Qatar Airways; EC-OES A350-941 Iberia; LZ-ROM A220-300 Bulgaria Air; SX-NEP A320-271N Aegean Airlines
8/1 B-8302 Gulfstream G550
10/1 CS-TVL A320-251N TAP Portugal
11/1 P4-USA Learjet 60
12/1 TC-LPB A321-271NX Turkish Airlines
13/1 JA880J 787-9 JAL; N427DX A330-941N Delta Airlines
14/1 4L-GIT 767-333(ER)(BDSF) Georgian Airlines
15/1 VT-AEF 777-232LR Air India
17/1 G-LMTG ATR 72-600 Loganair
19/1 9H-EWB A320-214 Eurowings
20/1 9XR-WX A330-243 RwandAir

KEY

- f/v first visit
- n/s night stop
- o/s overshoot



▲ Basel, Switzerland-based Jet Aviation Business Jets operated this Gulfstream G550, HB-IIW (c/n 5415) on a charter from Amman, Jordan, to London Luton on December 8. The 2013-built jet returned to Amman nine days later [AirTeamimages.com/Alex Peake](http://AirTeamimages.com/Alex_Peake)

Jersey Airport

- 1/11 D-CBBS Phenom 300
- 6/11 SP-DLV CitationJet 525 CJ1; 285 C-295MPA 101 Sqn, Irish Air Corps
- 7/11 9H-JPC Legacy 600; F-HDSR DA40D; SP-TTA Beech 400XT
- 8/11 9H-XFX Legacy 500
- 12/11 N613LF Gulfstream G550
- 13/11 F-HCSV DA42; N540LF Gulfstream G650ER; N613LF Gulfstream G550
- 14/11 I-VICC Partenavia P.68B
- 15/11 F-HLTM Pipistrel Virus SW 121A
- 17/11 9H-ASB Global 5000; LX-JFD PC-12NG
- 19/11 9H-ZFX Legacy 500; M-DIVE PC-24
- 21/11 F-HASJ Citation 510 Mustang
- 22/11 9H-IRL Citation 560XL; 9H-KFX Praetor 600; F-BPIC PA-30-160; F-BPIR PA-30-160; LX-JFE PC-12NG
- 23/11 F-GDSE DA40D
- 28/11 D-CVMS PC-24
- 30/11 9H-JFX Praetor 600; LX-PCG PC-24; 14+03 Global 5000 FBS, German AF

Leeds Bradford

- 2/8 LY-HCW Hawker 800XP; N83CW Gulfstream G650ER
- 3/8 D-CFAF LearJet 60
- 4/8 2-MLBU PA-46-350P; OK-PCF PC-12NG
- 6/8 EJ-JMMM Global XRS; D-ASAP Legacy 650E; 07-00102 Cessna UC-35A USAF
- 9/8 D-COPI PC-24; D-APRI E190SR German Airways ops for KLM
- 10/8 D-CHRG Citation 680A Latitude; EI-BUF Cessna 210N; LX-FMA Falcon 900LX
- 11/8 OY-VNS Vulcanair P68C
- 13/8 OO-DAZ Cessna 182P
- 15/8 9H-IRL Citation 560XL
- 16/8 CS-LTX Citation 680A Latitude NetJets Europe; N949MC Challenger 605
- 17/8 N728LB Gulfstream IV(SP); D-CPTN PC-24
- 18/8 D-CICU Learjet 45; 9H-IFX Praetor 600
- 19/8 LY-LTA Hawker 800XP; D-ATOP Legacy 650E
- 20/8 N865WW Challenger 300; 9H-VTD Global 6000 VistaJet
- 22/8 OO-PCC PC-12NGX
- 23/8 CS-CLB Challenger 650; D-IBEA CitationJet 525A CJ2+
- 24/8 C-FEMT Learjet 40
- 25/8 9H-VCY Challenger 350; D-ARMY Legacy 650E; YU-TBA Citation 560XLS+
- 29/8 OY-JJC Hawker 800XP; OY-RUZ A320-232 Danish Air Transport ops for Jet2
- 31/8 F-HRCA Cessna 525 CJ1+; YL-ABB A220-300 Air Baltic ops for Jet2
- 1/9 YU-PMK Cessna 560XLS+; 9H-DOM CL850 Challenger Air X
- 2/9 9H-VJM Global 6000 Vistajet; PH-SVX PA-31T2 Cheyenne IIXL
- 3/9 N1032X Mooney M20TN; OE-GIE Cessna 525B CJ3
- 4/9 9H-IGH Global 6000 Vistajet; OK-PHO Phenom 300

- 6/9 9H-VCX Challenger 350; A9C-HIA AW139
- 7/9 D-AONE Challenger 604
- 8/9 OK-EBT PC-24; F-HBPE ERJ-145LR Pan Europeenne Air Service
- 9/9 N141KJ Cirrus SR22T
- 10/9 CS-GLF Global 6000 NetJets Europe
- 12/9 SP-NVM Gulfstream G280; D-CAKE Phenom 300
- 13/9 N884BN Falcon 900EX; EI-HHG Cessna F172K
- 14/9 C-GHSW Global 7500 Skyservice; PH-KEK Citation 560XLS
- 15/9 G-CMPI E170LR Eastern Airways Football charter
- 16/9 OK-AST Citation 560XL
- 17/9 C-FTML Challenger 604; YU-SXX Citation 550 Bravo
- 19/9 OY-NPD Metro 23 North Flying; PH-FCI Jetstream 32 AIS Airlines
- 20/9 D-IFAS Beech 58P
- 23/9 9H-LXX Global 6000 Vistajet
- 26/9 G-CMMT ATR72-600 Aer Lingus regional
- 27/9 YU-SVJ Citation 560XLS+; CS-GLZ Global 5000 Netjets Europe
- 30/9 N797CX Citation 750 X

London Luton

- 1/12 T7-NKS Hawker 800XP
- 3/12 D-AIFH Falcon 7X
- 4/12 EC-NRA PC-24; OE-GTO CitationJet 525B CJ3; G-WUNB A321-271NX on delivery to Wizz Air UK
- 5/12 N626JJ Global 6000; A9C-SLM Gulfstream G550
- 6/12 N588SE Gulfstream G650ER; D-CAAF Phenom 300
- 7/12 G-WUNA A321-271NX on delivery to Wizz UK
- 8/12 HB-IIW Gulfstream G550
- 9/12 HB-VAE PC-24; SX-FAM Falcon 2000EX; OO-FSX Falcon 7X
- 11/12 YR-DSE A320-232 Dan Air – new service to Bacau
- 12/12 P4-BTR Gulfstream G450
- 13/12 N650SS Global 6500; N887MM Gulfstream G550
- 14/12 LX-JFD PC-12NG
- 15/12 P4-AAA Gulfstream V
- 16/12 N104AR Gulfstream G500; P4-BFR Gulfstream G550 Stansted diversion; N757RR Gulfstream G650ER
- 17/12 P4-RLA A319-133X(CJ)
- 18/12 OE-LTP Gulfstream G650ER; F-HJLP Praetor 600
- 19/12 D-CPAV Phenom 300
- 20/12 7T-VNC Citation 560XLS+; N181QS Global 7500
- 21/12 OE-LVM Falcon 8X
- 22/12 OH-IBZ PC12-NGX; YR-JUL A320-232 Dan Air; TC-MPA Citation 680 Sovereign
- 23/12 OY-TPJ Citation 525M2; T7-DPR Falcon 900LX

KEY

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25/12	N179C Falcon 8X
26/12	D-CALM Citation XLS+
27/12	VT-RIM Gulfstream G550; PH-RRW Global 6500
28/12	HA-SCU Citation 650 VI
31/12	TC-RSF Challenger 605

London Southend	
2/11	D-IAAT Phenom 100; SP-TTA Beech 400XP
3/11	OO-NSG CitationJet 525C CJ4; T7-SYC Avanti II
5/11	EJ-JMMM Global XRS
6/11	CN-SRA Citation 650 VI
10/11	D-AEWW A320-214(SL) Eurowings to Air Livery dep 25th
13/11	N922JC Beech C90B
14/11	CS-PHU & CS-PHY Phenom 300s NetJets Europe
15/11	9H-IMP Legacy 600
19/11	OE-LSA A320-251N easyJet Europe
20/11	OY-RIB Avanti II
21/11	M-ARIE Hawker 800XP
23/11	N44NE Cessna 414; OE-LSI A320-251N easyJet Europe
24/11	M-ABRC ATR 72-212A Southern Cross International, from Franczal in basic AfriJet colours, Dep to Orebro on 25th
T7-BSG	CitationJet 525 CJ1; N788DP BBJ1
25/11	D-AEWT A320-214(SL) Eurowings to Air Livery
26/11	OE-LSM A320-251N easyJet Europe
27/11	OE-LLS Global 7500

Manchester	
1/12	A7-ANP A350-1041 Qatar Airways; 9H-VVO 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; D-AEEA A321-251NX Eurowings; D-CLAY Do.328-110 Private Wings, ops for for Sun Air; 9H-EFS A330-202 Maleth Aero
2/12	D-CAAF Phenom 300; TC-LAA Citation 560 V
3/12	EI-IHX 737MAX-8200 Ryanair, Leeds Bradford diversion; OE-LFL ATR 72-202(F) Zimex Aviation Austria; PH-SCH Pilatus PC-12NG
4/12	SE-RSS E195LR SAS Link; G-DRTX 737-8AL Jet2; 9H-BFS A330-203 Maleth Aero
6/12	EI-IHZ 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; D-ARIE Falcon 7X; N10X Falcon 900C; ZM401 A400M 99 Sqn, RAF
7/12	A7-ANM A350-1041 Qatar Airways; A9C-FH 787-9 Gulf Air; EC-NZJ A330-243 Privilege Style ops for Aer Lingus; YR-TRO Legacy 600
8/12	OE-LFM ATR 72-202(F) Zimex Aviation Austria
10/12	EI-IHW 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; CS-GLK Global 6500 NetJets Europe
11/12	D-ABOM 757-330 Condor, Bayern Munich vs Man United, Champions League
12/12	D-AMAH 737MAX-8 TUI Germany, Bayern Munich fans charter; EC-NHM A330-343E Wamos Air ops for Aer Lingus; N77LD Cirrus SF50 type f/v
13/12	9H-EUN A320-214 Eurowings Europe f/v; F-HALV Citation 525M2 f/v

14/12	CN-GMT Gulfstream G450 f/v
15/12	TC-RDU A321-251NX Pegasus Airlines; G-TUOD 737MAX-8 TUI Airways, delivery flight ex Everett
16/12	A7-ANS A350-1041 Qatar Airways; TC-SMK 737MAX-8 Sun Express
17/12	9H-VVM 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; TC-LGO A350-941 Turkish Airlines; G-EJCG A320-214 Easyjet; N4500X Gulfstream G600
18/12	F-HPNE A220-300 Air France; TC-JJT 777-3F2ER Turkish Airlines; OO-SFE A330-343E Brussels Airlines dep after maintenance at STS
19/12	SP-RUM 737-73S Ryanair; N157QS Global 6000; D-BABE Legacy 500
20/12	G-LMTG ATR 72-600 Loganair
21/12	S2-AHN 777-3E9ER Bangladesh Biman; 9H-QFB 737-8AS Ryanair; 9H-QFE 737-8AS Ryanair
22/12	TC-RDS A321-251NX Pegasus Airlines; G-CLYU E190LR Eastern Airways
23/12	HB-AYQ A320-251N easyJet Switzerland
24/12	SP-RNB 737-8AS Ryanair
25/12	D-ABUC 767-330ER Condor medical diversion Frankfurt-Toronto; N351DY Beech 350
26/12	EI-SCC A320-251N SAS
27/12	EI-IJB 737MAX-8200 Ryanair; EI-SCB A320-251N SAS; G-EODS A330-343X(P2F) Titan Airways / Geodis Air Network, for maintenance at STS, dep 29th
28/12	HB-JXU A320-214(SL) easyJet Switzerland
29/12	SP-RZD 737MAX-8200 Ryanair Leeds Bradford weather diversion
30/12	G-TNEB A321-251NX British Airways
31/12	9H-QFD 737-8AS Ryanair; OK-KGR Citation 560XLS+

Teesside	
1/10	N121RS Global 7500 dep 3rd
2/10	D-FEEL PC-12NGX n/s
3/10	I-SLNI Falcon 900EX dep 5th
5/10	HB-IAA Falcon 7X dep 8th
7/10	M-SKTO H160
8/10	D-CTRI Learjet 35A; SE-RFH Citation 680 Sovereign n/s also 25th
10/10	2-MSTG Citation 510 Mustang also 25th
11/10	D-CFAZ Learjet 60
13/10	EI-IKB A320-214 ITA Airways for storage
14/10	LZ-CVB Citation 560XLS+ n/s
16/10	N288Z Gulfstream G650; M-AMBA Gulfstream G600 n/s
17/10	G-EZAW A319-111 easyJet for storage/parting out
18/10	ZK-IGM EC130
20/10	D-ANCE Legacy 650
23/10	M-OUSY Gulfstream G280
26/10	T-784 Citation 560XL LTDB, Swiss AF
27/10	T-785 Falcon 900EX LTDB, Swiss AF; LX-FCB PC-24
29/10	D-CLIF Phenom 300 also 31st

With thanks to: D Apps, D Bougourd, S Boyd, J Brazier, N Burch, P A Clarke, I Cockerton, KW Ede, M Farley, N French, P Gibson, G Green, J Gregory, I Grierson, D Haines, M Harper, G Hocquard, S Lane, S McDiarmid, G Morris, S Morrison, R Roberts, R J Sayer, A Smith, D Turner, C Ward, Blackpool Aviation Society, Solent Aviation Society/'Osprey', South Wales Aviation Group, CIAN, GSAE, The Aviation Society, EGPE ATC, www.dtmovements.co.uk, Aerodata Quantum Plus and RHADS.



◀ Loganair's latest ATR 72-600, G-LMTG (c/n 1124), was quickly pressed into service after being delivered to the Glasgow-based carrier on December 11. It made appearances at Aberdeen, London Heathrow and Manchester before year's end AirTeamImages.com/Simon Willson

TUI Airways Boeing 737-800, G-TAWB (c/n 37242), has returned from duties on the Continent, where it flew with TUI fly as D-ATYM for 11 months between January and December 2023 [AirTeamImages.com/Alex Peake](https://www.airteamimages.com/Alex%20Peake)



The latest changes on the UK, Irish, Isle of Man and Guernsey registers

Restorations				
Reg'n	Mode(S)	Type	C/N	Owner
G-BIFO	401EE7	Evans VP-1 Series 2 (built by P Raggett)	PFA 062-10411	ELE Webley, (Morpeth, Northumberland)
G-CGTV	406568	I.C.P. MXP-740 Savannah VG Jabiru (1) (built by P Etherington & B Cook)	BMAA/HB/609	BL Cook, (Wyke, East Yorkshire)
G-GLSA	406DFA	Evektor EV-97 Eurostar SL (assembled by Light Sport Aviation Ltd)	2014-4216	MD Morris & AP Hillier, Trustees of G-GLSA Group, Carlisle Lake District, Cumbria
G-NHVL	407E10	Airbus EC175B	5057	MHS Aviation Berhad, (Kuala Lumpur-Subang, Malaysia)
G-TAWB	40665F	Boeing 737-8K5	37242	TUI Airways Ltd, trading as TUI, London Luton, Bedfordshire (NB)

New Registrations				
Reg'n	Mode(S)	Type	C/N	Owner
G-CMPW	408074	Exodus Deltajet 500 Stingray	EA019	TJ Burrow, (Preston, Lancashire)
G-CMPX	40806F	Flylight Nine	DA262	PDE Batterson, Darley Moor, Derbyshire
G-CMRN	4080A7	MDH MD 369E (built by McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company)	0191E	Flitwick Helicopters Ltd, (Castle Dairy Farm, Renhold, Bedfordshire)
G-CMRS	4080A8	MDH MD 369E (built by McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company)	0200E	Flitwick Helicopters Ltd, (Castle Dairy Farm, Renhold, Bedfordshire)
G-CMRU	4080A9	MDH MD 369E (built by McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company)	0392E	Flitwick Helicopters Ltd, (Castle Dairy Farm, Renhold, Bedfordshire)

G-CMSH	4080BA	Best Off Skyranger Swift 912S(1)	BMAA/HB/760	AM Sutton, (Stourbridge, West Midlands)
G-CMTH	4080C4	TEAM Hi-Max 1700R	SMH-006	SM Hall, (Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire)
G-CMTI	4080B7	Clarke Vun	JC-001	JJD Clarke, (Treeton, South Yorkshire)
G-CMUK	40120D	Rockwell Commander 112TC	13010	J Duffy, Oaksey Park, Wiltshire
G-CMUZ	408075	Exodus Deltajet 500 Stingray	EA018	DP Clarke, (Nuneaton, Warwickshire)
G-CNPW	4080D0	Kubicek BB20E	2251	DM Hoddinott, (Bristol, City of Bristol)
G-DMBD	407EC5	Schleicher ASK-21B	211008	Wolds Gliding Club Ltd, Pocklington, East Riding of Yorkshire
G-ECLK	4080CA	Airbus A340-642	1079	European Cargo Ltd, (stored at Ciudad Real, Spain)
G-EYVZ	408070	North American Navion (L-17A)	NAV-4-911	Lithica Navion LLP, Earls Colne, Essex
G-FHJT	408058	Honda HA-420 Hondajet	42000024	Bookajet Aircraft Management Ltd, Farnborough, Hampshire
G-HNEY	408088	Bombardier Global 7500	70117	Concierge U Ltd, London Stansted (NB)
G-HUWE	400D50	Hughes 369HS	610326S	Rotec Property Ltd, (Evesham, Worcestershire)
G-KAVI	408091	Cessna 182T Skylane	18282112	CS Jundu, (Aldridge, West Midlands)
G-LAAA	407F76	Airbus EC135 T3	2242	Airbus Helicopters UK Ltd (for London Air Ambulance, RAF Northolt, Greater London)
G-LMTG	408066	ATR-72-212A	1124	Loganair Ltd, Glasgow, Renfrewshire
G-MDSE	408076	Pilatus PC-12/47E	2322	Select Aircraft Ltd, Manchester, Greater Manchester (NB)
G-OLGE	4080B1	Cirrus SR20	2047	Bliss Aviation Ltd & Switchdata Investments Ltd, Bournemouth, Dorset
G-OSIM	4080BE	Flylight Peabee Red-Line	DA159	SJ Culpin, Balado, Perth & Kinross
G-PJCM	408099	Agusta AW139	41207	Bond Helicopters Ltd, Norwich International, Norfolk (operated by Gama Aviation (UK) Ltd)

G-PJCN	40809A	Agusta AW139	41212	Bond Helicopters Ltd, Norwich International, Norfolk (operated by Gama Aviation (UK) Ltd)
G-PJCS	40809B	Agusta AW139	41220	Bond Helicopters Ltd, Norwich International, Norfolk (operated by Gama Aviation (UK) Ltd)
G-TNEB	407FCA	Airbus A321-251NX	11585	British Airways PLC, London Heathrow, Middlesex
G-TNEC	407FCB	Airbus A321-251NX	11744	British Airways PLC, London Heathrow, Middlesex
G-TUOD	408086	Boeing 737-8	44662	TUI Airways Ltd, trading as TUI, London Luton, Bedfordshire (N/B)
G-WUNA	408041	Airbus A321-271NX	11591	Wizz Air UK Ltd, London Luton, Bedfordshire
G-WUNB	40804D	Airbus A321-271NX	11655	Wizz Air UK Ltd, London Luton, Bedfordshire
G-XWBR	407FCC	Airbus A350-1041	639	British Airways PLC, London Heathrow, Middlesex
EI-HHP	4CAD59	Airbus A220-371	55248	ALC Blarney Aircraft Ltd, (leased to ITA Airways, Rome-Fiumicino (NB))
EI-HLB	4CAE12	Airbus A220-100	50070	ALC Blarney Aircraft Ltd, (leased to ITA Airways, Rome-Fiumicino (NB))
EI-HMF	TBA	Airbus A330-343	833	MacQuarie Aerospace Ireland Ltd Ltd (stored Teruel, Spain)
EI-HMH	TBA	Boeing 787-9	62735	ZF Ireland Aircraft 83 Ltd, (stored Tarbes-Lourdes, France)
EI-HXB	4CAE18	Airbus A321-271NX	11657	ALC Blarney Aircraft Ltd, (leased to ITA Airways, Rome Fiumicino (NB))
EI-IJA	4CAE51	Boeing 737-8200	62367	Ryanair DAC, Dublin, Co. Fingal (NB)
EI-IJB	4CAE52	Boeing 737-8200	67094	Ryanair DAC, Dublin, Co. Fingal (NB)
EI-IJC	4CAE53	Boeing 737-8200	67092	Ryanair DAC, Dublin, Co. Fingal (NB)
EI-IJH	4CAE58	Boeing 737-8200	62372	Ryanair DAC, Dublin, Co. Fingal (NB)

Previous Identities

Reg'n	Previous Identity	EI-HLB	ex C-FTWU
G-CMRN	ex OK-PKS	EI-HMF	ex CS-TRH
G-CMRS	ex OK-HSO	EI-HMH	ex VN-A818
G-CMRU	ex OK-EAI	EI-HXB	ex D-AYAE
G-CMUK	ex G-ERIC	EI-IJA	ex N4022T
G-ECLK	ex EC-LEV	EI-IJC	ex N4022T
G-EYVZ	ex F-AYVZ	EI-IJH	ex N4022S
G-FHJT	ex N25HJ	EI-SCC	ex F-WWDE
G-HNEY	ex N717GL	EI-SCE	ex F-WWIU
G-HUWE	ex G-TCEE	EI-SIW	ex F-WWDU
G-KAVI	ex LN-TRF	EI-TYA	ex F-WWXB
G-LAAA	ex D-HCSF	M-ABSJ	ex PR-GKA
G-LMTG	ex M-ABPJ	M-EGWD	ex N750GF
G-MSDE	ex HB-FQD	M-FRSG	ex C-GXBM
G-NHVL	ex (9M-)	M-III	ex N649GA
G-OLGE	ex N586PU	M-INKE	ex N627G
G-PJCM	ex PR-SEO	M-NACK	ex ZS-TNF
G-PJCN	ex PR-SES	M-NGEL	ex G-COBO
G-PJCS	ex PR-SET	M-PINK	ex N2018R
G-TAWB	ex D-ATYM	M-VGAL	ex N900DJ
G-TNEB	ex D-AZWB	2-DTOX	ex VN-A592
G-TNEC	ex D-AZAW	2-KPOW	ex TR-XCH
G-TUOD	ex N5515X	2-NETY	ex S2-AJQ
G-WUNA	ex D-AYAF	2-RELC	ex VN-A592
G-WUNB	ex D-AZWX	2-STNA	ex HS-TNA
G-XWBR	ex F-WZHX	2-UALA	ex YU-ALU
EI-HHP	ex C-FOVX	2-YYAB	ex OY-YAB

EI-SCC	4CAD93	Airbus A320-251N	11796	Scandinavian Airlines Ireland Ltd, Stockholm-Arlanda, Sweden (NB)
EI-SCE	4CAD95	Airbus A320-251N	11767	Scandinavian Airlines Ireland Ltd, Stockholm-Arlanda, Sweden (NB)
EI-SIW	4CAE75	Airbus A320-251N	11801	Scandinavian Airlines Ireland Ltd, Copenhagen-Kastrup, Denmark (NB)
EI-TYA	4CAE80	Airbus A330-941	2047	Aurora Financing DAC,(leased to ITA Airways, Rome Fiumicino (NB))
M-ABSJ	424C55	Embraer EMB-550 Praetor 600	55020190	Icaris Ltd, TBA
M-EGWD	424C4F	Cessna 750 Citation X	750-0244	GIV Airways LLP, Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire
M-FRSG	424C50	Bombardier Global 7500	70166	SDI Aviation Ltd, Biggin Hill, Greater London
M-III	424C4A	Gulfstream G650ER	6549	Talisman Aviation Ltd, Farnborough, Hampshire
M-INKE	424C53	Gulfstream G600	73127	Hampshire Aviation LLP, Farnborough, Hampshire
M-NACK	424C51	Hawker 850XP	258724	Camissa One (Pty) Ltd, Cape Town, South Africa
M-NGEL	424C54	ATR-72-212A	852	Avions de Transport Regional GIE, (stored Tbilisi International, Georgia)
M-PINK	424C1B	Hawker 4000	RC-58	RS Aviation Ltd, TBA
M-VGAL	424C2A	Dassault Falcon 900EX	207	Charter Air Ltd, Oxford, Oxfordshire
2-DTOX	TBA	Airbus A320-251N	9115	Wilmington Trust SP Services (Ireland) Ltd, (stored Tainan, Republic of China)
2-KPOW	TBA	ATR-72-212(F)	460	ACIA Aero Leasing APAC Ltd, (stored Johannesburg, South Africa)
2-NETY	TBA	ATR-72-212(F)	395	ACIA Aero Leasing APAC Ltd, (stored Dhaka, Bangladesh)
2-RELC	TBA	Airbus A320-251N	9132	Wilmington Trust SP Services (Dublin) Ltd, (stored Tainan, Republic of China)
2-STNA	TBA	Airbus A340-642	677	Hua An Aviation Parts Company, (stored Taiyun-Wusu International, People's Republic of China)
2-UALA	TBA	ATR-72-212A	536	NK Aviation Ltd, (stored Teesside International, Durham – for parting out)
2-YYAB	TBA	ATR-72-212A	588	Aviation Traders Belgium SA, (stored Tamanrasset, Algeria)

▼ Former Alitalia Cityliner Embraer E170, G-CLVN (c/n 17000345), has been deregistered ahead of being transferred to the South African registry. It is set to join Airlink shortly [AirTeamImages.com/Jan Severijns](https://www.airteamimages.com/Jan-Severijns)



European Cargo has acquired this former Iberia Airbus A340-600, EC-LEV (c/n 1079), and placed it on the UK registry as G-ECLK. It remains stored at Ciudad Real Central Airport, Spain, where it was parked on August 29, 2020 [AirTeamImages.com/Yochai](https://www.airteamimages.com/Yochai)



Cancellations			
Reg'n	Type	C/N	Reason
G-AVSC	Piper PA-28-180 Cherokee	28-4193	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (force landed in a field at Musbury, Devon while on a flight from Dunkeswell 01.08.23 and came rest in River Axe)
G-AXHO	Beagle B121 Pup Series 2	B121-077	Cancelled as Destroyed (substantially damaged when blown upside down by Storm Eunice at North Weald 18.02.22)
G-AYCT	Reims Cessna F172H	0724	Cancelled by CAA (CofA expired 17.01.22. Details unknown)
G-AYNA	Currie Wot	PFA 3016	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expired 15.06.16. Believed to India for static display)
G-AZKP	Jodel D117	419	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (fell into a ditch on landing at Blair Atholl, Perth & Kinross 14.09.23)
G-AZWF	Jodel DR1050 Ambassadeur	130	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expired 27.10.22)
G-BEBU	Rockwell Commander 112	272	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (CofA expired 19.06.04. Details unknown)
G-BIFO	Evans VP-1 Series 2	PFA 062-10411	Cancelled by CAA (but restored again the same day)
G-BKAE	Jodel D120 Paris-Nice	200	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (crashed on landing at Shacklewell Lodge, Empingham, Rutland 23.06.21)
G-BXTT	Grumman American AA-5B Tiger	AA5B-0749	To France as F-HCTT
G-BZUC	Pegasus Quantum 15-912	7796	Cancelled by AA (Permit to Fly expired 06.05.13)
G-CBFN	Robin HR100/200B Royal	112	To Austria
G-CCRT	Pegasus Quantum 15	8014	Cancelled by CAA (Permit to Fly expires 09.08.24. Details unknown)
G-CCVW	Nicollier HN-700 Menestrel	PFA 217-11950	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expires 20.07.24. Details unknown)
G-CDCF	Mainair Pegasus Quik	8078	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expires 12.04.24. Details unknown)
G-CDIA	Thruster T600N 450	0051-T600N-111	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expired 28.09.21)

G-CHOZ	Rolladen-Schneider LS6-18W	6353	Cancelled by CAA (CofA expired 09.05.22)
G-CHWO	P & M Quik GTR	8654	Cancelled by CAA (crashed north of Cooling, Kent 10.06.21)
G-CIFE	Beech B200 King Air	BB-1829	To USA as N202XL
G-CKFE	EiriAvion PIK-20D	20520	To Austria
G-CLIA	Grob G109B	6108	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (crashed just after take-off from Husband Bosworth, Leicester 28.05.21)
G-CLPJ	Sikorsky S-92A	920091	To USA as N920VT
G-CLVN	Embraer 175	17000345	To South Africa
G-CLZM	Airplay Grif Zip/Eurofly Snake	20001	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (SSDR microlight so no Permit to Fly required)
G-CMFH	Tecnam P2006T	351	To Germany
G-CMTT	Airbus EC120 T2	9501	To New Zealand
G-CTUK	Cirrus SR20	2435	To USA as N803EA
G-DDCW	Schleicher KA.6CR Rhönsegler	1076	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (No CofA issued since registered 01.10.08)
G-DDOC	Schleicher KA.6CR Rhönsegler	6373Si	Cancelled by CAA (CofA expired 18.06.17)
G-DFBR	Grob G102 Astir CS77	1701	Cancelled by CAA (CofA expired 26.03.20)
G-DLOW	Grob G103 Twin II	3585	Cancelled as Destroyed (CofA expired 25.07.23)
G-EHTT	Schleicher ASW-20CL	20627	To Germany
G-ERIC	Rockwell Commander 112TC	13010	Re-registered as G-CMUK
G-ETGA	Pilatus PC-12/47E	2212	To USA as N85CH
G-HITK	Airbus AS350B3 Ecureuil	9167	To USA
G-JEDU	Bombardier DHC-8-402	4089	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (CofA expired 13.04.21, flown to Saarbrücken, Germany for storage 19.06.20)
G-JEDV	Bombardier DHC-8-402	4090	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (CofA expired 18.05.21, flown to Saarbrücken, Germany for storage 09.07.20)

G-JSMD	M & D Flugzeugbau JS-MD-3 Rapture	3.MD079	Cancelled as Destroyed (CofA expires 04.08.24)
G-KALS	Bombardier Challenger 300	20106	To USA as N808NC
G-LSAA	Boeing 757-236	24122	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (CofA expires 28.09.24. Flown Manchester to St Athan, Vale of Glamorgan 15.11.23 for parting out)
G-MCEN	Embraer EMB-550 Praetor 600	55020162	To USA as N54PM
G-MEDN	Airbus A321-231	3512	To Germany
G-MTNC	Mainair Gemini/Flash IIA (Modified)		588-1087-5-W377
G-MTUS	Solar Wings Pegasus XL-Q (Modified)	SW-WQ-0020	Cancelled by CAA (SSDR microlight so no Permit to Fly required)
G-MWJJ	Solar Wings Pegasus Quasar (Modified)	SW-WQQ-0342	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (SSDR microlight so no Permit to Fly required)
G-MWPW	AMF Chevvron 2-32C	27	To Lithuania
G-MYGV	Solar Wings Pegasus XL-R	SW-WA-1571	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expired 09.04.07)
G-MZDU	Pegasus Quantum 15-912	7260	Cancelled by CAA (Permit to Fly expired 02.02.20)

G-MZZT	Kolb Twinstar Mk.III (Modified SS)	PFA 205-12596	Cancelled by CAA (crashed on take-off Plaistows Farm, St Albans, Hertfordshire 30.01.22)
G-OASL	ATR-72-202(F)	265	To Hungary
G-ODOG	Piper PA-28R-200 Cherokee Arrow II	28R-7235197	To Belgium
G-RUGS	Campbell Cricket Mk.4	PFA G/03-1307	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (No Permit to Fly issued, Believed not completed)
G-TAWD	Boeing 737-8K5	37265	To Canada as C-FYSD
G-TCEE	Hughes 369HS	610326S	Re-registered as G-HUWE
G-VING	Sikorsky S-92A	920207	To USA as N902VA
G-VIVO	Nicollier HN-700 Menestrel II	PFA 217-14039	Cancelled as Permanently WFU (Permit to Fly expires 04.09.24)
G-XONE	Bombardier Challenger 604	5426	To Canada as C-FKNN
G-ZENJ	Learjet 45	45-565	To USA as N107VL
EI-DWI	Boeing 737-8AS	33643	To Poland as SP-RNB
EI-FAU	ATR-72-212A	1098	To Mauritius as 3B-NCP
EI-HAJ	Airbus A330-343	1559	To Philippines as RP-C8765
EI-HKU	Airbus A320-214	3508	To Sweden as SE-RGH
EI-HLW	Sikorsky S-92A	920175	To People's Republic of China
EI-JSK	Gulfstream G650	6070	To USA as N69WX
M-ABPJ	ATR-72-212A	1124	To United Kingdom as G-LMTG
M-ABSJ	Embraer EMB-550 Praetor 600		To USA as N914NX
M-AKKU	Embraer 190ECJ Lineage 1000	190000363	To Latvia as YL-UAG
M-CKSB	Dassault Falcon 2000	6	To Turkey
M-INTY	Gulfstream G280	2086	To USA as N986GA
2-BBMB	Boeing 737-8EH	34274	To Lithuania as LY-MGM
2-JGAF	Embraer 190	19000066	To South Africa
2-MGDC	Airbus A320-214	4820	To Philippines as RP-4268
2-SAHA	Airbus A330-243	1138	To Romania YR-KID
2-UALU	ATR-72-212A	536	Cancelled as owner's Request (To Teesside International Durham 11.12.23 for parting out)
2-XYAL	Airbus A320-214	4235	To United Arab Emirates as A6-AQG

Updates and Corrections

Reg'n	Details
G-BGRT	Became OE-CAF 11.23
G-CMKD	Manufacturer officially changed to R Meredith-Hardy, D Royle, JMR Royle & DS Simpson 07.12.23
G-MYLW	Type officially changed to a Rans S.6-ESD (Modified) 20.12.23
G-ODOG	Became OO-AIR
G-OGSE	Became VP-CMS 12.12.23
G-PHSE	Became PH-RSV 01.12.23
G-RZLY	C/n is actually 06-11-15 (corrects page 74, February 2024)
G-SNSL	Became PR-CGK
G-SZDA	Became LN-GQB 23.11.23
EI-AUO	Became I-SKYF 11.23
EI-HKV	Became LY-BNT 03.01.24
EJ-ROXY	Became TC-TSH 07.23
2-BPCC	Became D2-TBU 08.23
2-GJSA	Became VQ-TSM 11.23
2-TKQA	Became EZ-A781 11.23
2-UTMH	Became LY-BBN 10.23

Key: NB – Nominal Base. A place name in brackets relates to the owner's address, as where the aircraft is based is unknown.



This British Airways Airbus A321neo, G-TNEC (c/n 11744), was one of a trio of new-build airliners to be handed over from the European aerospace giant to the UK flag carrier in December. It also received another A321neo, G-TNEB (c/n 11585), and an A350-1000, G-XWBR (c/n 639) AirTeamImages.com/Rolf Jonsen



Kenya Airways' first Boeing 737-800(BCF), 5Y-KCA (c/n 29884), passed through Manchester Airport on its delivery flight. The aircraft, which had undergone freighter conversion at Miami International before being repainted at Dothan, from where its mammoth delivery flight began on January 17. The airliner passed through Bangor, Maine, Manchester and Cairo before arriving at Nairobi/Jomo Kenyatta three days later Nik French



A selection of aircraft movements caught by the Aviation News community



Another de Havilland Canada product and another former Brymon Airways turboprop! Maldivian airline has taken redelivery of DHC-6-300, N617JP (c/n 617). The 1979-built airliner, originally delivered to Brymon Airways as G-BGMC in April of that year, was involved in an incident at Male on February 13, 2021 and passed through Palma de Mallorca on its way back to the Indian Ocean carrier. It is expected to return to the Maldivian registry and its former registration of 8Q-RAE Javier Rodriguez



This Air Tanzania De Havilland Canada DHC 8-311Q, 5H-MWF (c/n 474), originally arrived at Malta International for maintenance on November 15, 2020. Despite having been present for more than three years, it was towed outside between Christmas and New Year and maintenance was performed on the former Brymon Airways, BA Connect and Flybe turboprop. It is unclear whether the 50-seater will leave Malta any time soon. Mario Caruana/MAViO News



US Marshals Service Boeing 737-800, N311MS (c/n 30670), visited Boeing Field late in 2023. The airliner was delivered to the US governmental body's Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System (JPATS) offshoot in April 2022. It previously served with Miami Air International from April 2004 until the Floridian carrier's May 2020 collapse, during which time it was seen on both sides of the Atlantic, being frequently leased to Transavia and Arkefly (now TUI fly Netherlands) Joe G Walker

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One step forward

At the end of 2023, the Boeing 737 MAX appeared to have turned a corner, regaining the trust of airlines and passengers alike after two high-profile accidents. Then there was the Alaska Airlines incident in January 2024. **Mark Broadbent** reports

At 17:06hrs on January 5, 2024, Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 took off from Portland International Airport, Oregon, on a domestic sector to Ontario International Airport, California. The connection was operated by a Boeing 737 MAX 9, N704AL (c/n 67501), a nearly brand-new aircraft delivered on October 31, 2023.

Approximately six minutes after departure, with the aircraft at around 15,000ft, a door plug on the port fuselage blew out and separated from the airframe, resulting in an uncontrolled decompression. Fortunately, nobody was in seat 26A, immediately next to the gaping hole that

appeared in the fuselage.

The aircraft's oxygen masks deployed. The pilots made an immediate descent and returned to Portland for an emergency landing at 17:27hrs. There were 171 passengers and six crewmembers aboard. Fortunately, only three passengers received minor injuries and some items were sucked out of the hole in the fuselage.

Grounding

The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Boeing, Alaska Airlines and the US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) quickly acknowledged the incident. An initial NTSB

▲ The 737 MAX 9 is currently the largest version of the family currently in airline service. All images Boeing unless stated



, two steps back?



inspection showed non-structural damage to the cabin at rows 1, 4, 11, 12, 25-27 and 31-33. Seat 25A lost its headrest and was twisted, while seat 26A lost its headrest and seatback cushion as well as the tray table on its rear side.

The FAA immediately issued an Emergency Airworthiness Directive for operators of similar 737 MAX 9s mandating checks, before fully grounding the aircraft on January 7, 2024. The order affected 171 jets, a relatively small portion of the total 737 MAX fleet in service. The baseline family variant, the 737-8, was unaffected by the grounding order.

An FAA statement on January 8, 2024, said: "The FAA has approved a [Boeing] method to comply with the FAA's emergency airworthiness directive, and it has been provided to the affected operators. Boeing 737-9 aircraft will remain grounded until operators complete enhanced inspections which include both left and right cabin door exit plugs, door components and fasteners. Operators must also complete corrective action requirements based on findings

◀ The aircraft involved in the January 5 incident, N704AL (c/n 67501), remains stored at Portland International Airport, Oregon, while the US National Transport Safety Board conducts its investigation Patrick T Fallon/Getty Images



▲ Aeromexico, Alaska Airlines, Copa Airlines, Turkish Airlines and United Airlines all fly the MAX 9 configured with mid exit door plugs

▼ Boeing has delivered 215 Boeing 737 MAX 9s since handing over the first example to Lion Air on March 21, 2018

from the inspections prior to bringing any aircraft back into service.”

Door plug

The 737-9, like its 737-900ER forerunner in the 737 Next Generation range, has optional rear mid-cabin emergency exit doors behind the wings on each side of the aircraft. The type is certified to carry 178 to 193 passengers as standard, or up to 220 passengers in a dense seating configuration. Operators making the most of the seat capacity, such as Lion Air, require the additional emergency exit doors and slides to meet evacuation regulations, but for carriers opting for the standard, less dense configuration – including Alaska Airlines, whose examples have 178 seats – these doors are not required.

Instead, ‘plugs’ are installed which replace the opening for the optional emergency exit door. On the interior of the aircraft, the plugs are covered with cabin panels that look the same as regular window panels. The 737 MAX fuselage, including the optional

door plugs, is manufactured and assembled by Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita, Kansas, then shipped by train to Boeing’s Renton factory in Washington State, where it joins other sections for final assembly.

Inspections

An update from the FAA on January 9, 2024, said: “Every 737-9 with a plug door will remain grounded until the FAA finds each can safely return to operation. Boeing must provide instructions to operators for inspections and maintenance. Boeing offered an initial version of instructions yesterday which they are now revising because of feedback received in response. Upon receiving the revised version of instructions from Boeing the FAA will conduct a thorough review.”

On January 12, 2024, the agency said it is “requiring Boeing to provide additional data before the agency approves an extensive and rigorous inspection and maintenance process for returning 737-9 aircraft to service.

“After reviewing Boeing’s proposed inspection and maintenance instructions, the FAA determined it needed additional data before approving them. Accordingly, the FAA is requiring plug-door inspections of 40 aircraft.”

The agency emphasised it “will not approve the inspection and maintenance process until it reviews data from the initial round of 40 inspections” and will determine whether the instructions comply with safety standards after undertaking a full review of the data.

“If the FAA approves Boeing’s inspection and maintenance instructions, operators will be required to perform that regimen on every aircraft before it is returned to service.”

A timescale for the 737-9’s return to service was uncertain at the time of going to press in January





noted, the 737-900ER “has the same door plug design” as the MAX 9.

Scrutiny

The 737 MAX, of course, was previously grounded for 21 months from March 2019 to December 2020 after the October 2018 Lion Air Flight 610 and March 2019 Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 disasters that killed 346 people. As a result, Boeing updated the flight control software to address issues with the Manoeuvring Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS), identified as the common cause in the two accidents. The company also revised pilot-training procedures and maintenance requirements. The 737 MAX was recertified and the FAA (and other regulators worldwide) ‘ungrounded’ the aircraft in 2020, enabling operations and deliveries to resume.

The Lion and Ethiopian crashes prompted a much broader investigation by the US House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure into the 737 MAX design/certification processes and those used for all civil aircraft. A subsequent bipartisan bill, the Aircraft Certification Reform and Accountability Act, was passed to update the FAA’s regulatory processes. The legislation directs the FAA to require certain safety standards during aircraft certification. There are also requirements for disclosing safety-critical information and protections for whistleblowers.

The Aircraft Certification Reform and Accountability Act sharpened regulatory eyes and provided the context for the protracted certification of the next

▲ Currently, 11 airlines operate the Boeing 737 MAX, of which five have the airliner configured with mid exit door plugs

2024, but FAA administrator Mike Whitaker emphasised: “We are working to make sure nothing like this happens again. Our only concern is the safety of travellers and the 737-9 will not return to the skies until we are entirely satisfied it is safe. The safety of the flying public, not speed, will determine the timeline for returning the Boeing 737-9 MAX to service.”

On January 21, the FAA issued a recommendation for operators of the 737-900ER to undertake checks on their aircraft as “an added layer of safety”. A statement said: “The FAA is recommending that operators of 737-900ER aircraft visually inspect mid-exit door plugs to ensure the door is properly secured.”

The 737-900ER is not a MAX. It is the lengthened variant in the 737 Next Generation range, the preceding version of 737 aircraft from which the MAX was derived. However, the FAA

▼ Alaska Airlines operates 65 MAX 9 jets, all of which have been affected by the grounding AirTeamImages.com/Kaden Chang



Prior to the grounding, Boeing had been anticipating the FAA's certification of the 737 MAX 10



two 737 MAX variants. Flight testing of the shortened 737-7 (using N7201S c/n 42561) began on March 16, 2018, and the lengthened 737-10 (with N27751 c/n 66122) on June 18, 2021, but both remain uncertified. In late 2023 it was expected the approvals for the 737-7/10 would be forthcoming. However, just weeks later, the 737-9 grounding means those in the industry widely anticipate the process will be further delayed.

Delegated authority

In broad terms, the Aircraft Certification Reform and Accountability Act seeks to strengthen processes around new commercial aircraft. This bigger picture is relevant, given a further significant announcement after the 737-9's grounding.

On January 12, 2024, the FAA announced it would "immediately increase its oversight of Boeing production and manufacturing." The regulator said it would audit Boeing's 737-9 production line in Renton and its supply chains to evaluate compliance with the regulator's approved quality procedures. The results "will determine whether additional audits are necessary," the FAA said, adding it would introduce "increased monitoring of 737-9 in-service events."

Significantly, the FAA said it would assess "safety risks around delegated authority and quality oversight" and examine options "to move these functions under independent, third-party entities." The term 'delegated authority' refers to a long-established practice in the aerospace industry, where



manufacturers are granted a significant amount of autonomy in ensuring their products comply with regulations.

The FAA's Mike Whitaker said: "It is time to re-examine the delegation of authority and assess any associated safety risks. The grounding of the 737-9 and the multiple production-related issues identified in recent years require us to look at every option to reduce risk." The 'production-related issues' to which Whitaker referred include one identified only shortly before the January 2024 Alaska Airlines incident and involved a possible loose bolt in the rudder control system. Following consultation with the FAA, on December 28, 2023, Boeing recommended operators of newer 737s to inspect specific tie rods that control

▲ The US Federal Aviation Administration has halted Boeing's plans to increase production of the 737 MAX, meaning a repeat of views such as this at Moses Lake in June 2022 is unlikely
[AirTeamImages.com/Simon Willson](#)



◀ United Airlines is considering fleet plans without the larger 737 MAX 10 variant, with CEO Scott Kirby telling CNBC that "the MAX 9 grounding is probably the straw that broke the camel's back for us" United Airlines

rudder movement for possible loose hardware.

The FAA said: “The agency is asking the airlines to work through their approved Safety Management Systems to identify whether any loose hardware has been detected previously and to provide the agency with details on how quickly these two-hour inspections can be completed. The FAA will consider additional action based on any further discovery of loose or missing hardware.

“Boeing recommended the inspections after an international operator discovered a bolt with a missing nut while performing routine maintenance on a mechanism in the rudder-control linkage. The company discovered an additional undelivered aircraft with a nut that was not properly tightened.”

Quality inspections

On January 15, 2024, Boeing said it would introduce further inspections during production of the 737 MAX. Boeing Commercial Airplanes CEO Stan Deal said the company would send a team to supplier Spirit AeroSystems to check and approve the contractor’s work on door plugs before fuselages are sent to Renton. Checks will also be conducted at 50 other points in Spirit’s production process, according to an internal memo from Deal to Boeing employees and quoted by Reuters, among other outlets.

Boeing will also hold sessions on quality

management for employees and will bring in an outside party to conduct an independent assessment of its production process, Deal continued. Both Boeing and Spirit will open their 737 production facilities to airline customers so that carriers can make their own inspections.

Deal said these actions are separate to the FAA’s investigation and that he plans to increase oversight of MAX production. Boeing will conduct “thorough inspections of the mid-exit door plugs as mandated by the FAA,” he wrote. Boeing has boosted its number of a quality inspectors by 20% since 2019 and plans to make additional investments, Deal added.

On January 16, Boeing announced the appointment, effective immediately, of retired US Navy Admiral Kirkland H Donald as a special advisor on quality. A statement said: “Admiral Donald and a team of outside experts will conduct a thorough assessment of Boeing’s quality management system [QMS] for commercial airplanes, including quality programmes and practices in Boeing manufacturing facilities and its oversight of commercial supplier quality.”

Deal’s memo said: “Everything we do must conform to the requirements in our QMS. Anything less is unacceptable. It is through this standard that we must operate to provide our customers and their passengers complete confidence in Boeing airplanes.”

▼ Southwest Airlines has more than 300 Boeing 737 MAX 7s on order, but has removed the variant from its 2024 plans due to the recent MAX 9 grounding



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